

THE YOGA OF THE PLANETS

CHANDRA, THE MOON

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HOW THIS BOOK WILL HELP YOU

This book has many uses. In itself, it is a meditation. There is no need to know anything about Vedic Astrology to enjoy and benefit. There are insights into astrology but the main focus is enlightening the consciousness and providing a rebalancing of the energies represented by the planets. This will happen automatically as one reads the mantras and their commentaries.

There are 108 mantras for each planet used in Vedic Astrology. Each mantra is a descriptive name converted to a salutation and used for meditation or chanting. For example ‘om śāntāya namah’ means ‘salutations to the peaceful one’ and is based on the name śānta (shaanta) which means peaceful. Reciting the mantra develops understanding for the quality embodied in the name and can help mental clarity and spiritual development. In the translation, the first mantra of each planet is fully translated. After that, just the names are translated leaving ‘Salutations to’ understood.

The Vedic planets are normally listed in the order of the days of the week. They are the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn plus the two eclipse points. These are the Lunar nodes called Rāhu (the North node) and Ketu (the South node). The Vedic ‘planets’ are often referred to as ‘Grahas’, the Sanskrit word which means ‘graspers’, as they appear to guide and control our experiences.

For the first time, these mantras are listed with translation and commentary. Even if you only read the commentaries, you will get some of the benefit. If the planet is weak or afflicted in your life, then this acts as a remedy. If it is already strong, this helps to enliven its full value.

A common way of using these mantras is to recite the set of 108 for the planet one chooses¹. For example, one could recite the mantras of the Sun on Sunday mornings. The next chapter, *Find your Personal Mantras*, will explain how to go beyond this and find out which of the mantras will especially enliven your personal chart.

The mantras of the more malefic planets, such as Mars, Saturn, Rāhu and Ketu, naturally contain some names, which describe the more challenging side of the Graha. These help us to understand certain behaviours and this can be remedial. For these names, it may be better to contemplate the deeper meanings rather than simply repeating them. For example, Rāhu is said to be cruel. This association with cruelty arises out of fear. Fear is deeply seated in survival issues.

Contemplating the mantra may help one get in touch with the source of the problem, so it can be alleviated. Loving an injured heart can be the basis of real change. This applies to our self or another. I do not recommend using the more challenging names as regular practice

mantras and I certainly do not recommend you ask another person to do them even if they come up when you do the calculations described in the next chapter. On the other hand, I have found listening to the sets of 108 names has been beneficial for my clients.

If chanting one or a set of mantras, I suggest you start with

om gam gaṇapataye namaḥ

to invoke the pure state of mind and end with

om sāntih sāntih sāntih

meaning ‘Om peace, peace, peace’.

For convenience, I am publishing the mantras of the nine planets of Vedic Astrology in nine separate eBooks. Put together, the length was too great but I am combining them all in the printed version. To find the eBook for another planet, visit YogaOfThePlanets.com. There you can also find information on the audio of the recitation of the mantras. I have on occasion given these to clients to listen to when that planet was afflicted in their chart with very positive results.

FIND YOUR PERSONAL MANTRAS

A great secret being released with this book is how to find the best mantras for you from the list of 108. This secret has been closely kept by a few Indian Astrologers and I am indebted to my teacher, Pandit Sanjay Rath, for enlightening me about this.

It is very simple. The reason why there are 108 mantras for the planets as well as such lists for the deities is because the zodiac is naturally divided into 108 segments. 108 is said to be the number of Shree, the Goddess of prosperity. Astrologically, it is our whole world. For example, the name of a new born child is often given based on the Moon's place in these divisions.

It is not only the Moon that is important. The Sun is very important and all the other planets of Vedic Astrology can be key. It all depends on our chart. Whatever the chart, doing the mantra for the position of a planet can be very beneficial. It will resonate with us and thus has extra energy.

There are a number of approaches for finding a powerful mantra for you or for a client, student or friend. The first I describe requires no astrology and the others are connected to the actual positions of the planets. For those with an interest in Vedic Astrology, this can become quite detailed as we drill down on the relationship between different planets. Therefore, a chapter on advanced applications is to be found in the printed version of the book. Here we give the easy astrological applications.

However you arrive at a mantra, please pay attention to the caveat mentioned in the previous section.

Method One, the Random Number

Picking a random number may sound an unlikely idea but it is something that many prognostic systems employ, including the Vedic Astrology method of answering questions. This technique often gives clear insights. If you are calm and quietly focused, then nature talks to you and one way of facilitating this is picking a number. There are really two situations, finding a number for oneself and finding one for another. For example, if you are a Yoga teacher whose student wants a mantra or someone sharing with a friend.

Suppose you want a random number for yourself and do not want to imagine a number out of 108. You can get three single digit numbers by picking numbers you see. One way is to open a book and take the final digit of the page number and do this three times. For example, suppose you open a book at random three times and get pages 21, 143 and 79. Pick the final digits which would be 1, 3 and 9. Write down these digits to form a number 139 and adjust

to the desired range by subtracting 108. In this example, $139 - 108 = 31$. Of course, you can come up with many alternate ways of getting a number.

My astrological software Shri Jyoti Star² gives a random number. In the Data Entry screen, click ‘Enter Number’. If you are asked about ‘Replacing the current chart...’ click Yes or No. In the next screen, make sure the Range is set to 108 and you will see a random number is given to you.

If there is another person involved, one can ask them for a number. This often works. What we want is a number between 1 and 108. If the person gives us a number larger than 108, we can keep subtracting 108 until we get a number in the desired range. For example, if they say 250, then subtracting 108 twice (216) gives 34. However, we may feel that the person is interpreting our answer to mean a single digit number only or perhaps knows the system we are using too well and may be biased towards certain numbers. Then we can ask for three single digit numbers as in the method described just above but we can write them down in reverse order. This is just a suggestion, in reality we can use any scheme that we like.

A separate app for this book is planned, which will do both random number and astrological calculations (information will be posted on YogaOfThePlanets.com).

Method Two, Using the Astrological Chart

The following is how to find the number for your natal Moon (or any planet). First, find out the sidereal position from any software, for example Shri Jyoti Star. In the current version 7, it will also give you the mantra number next to the planet glyphs in charts. The planned app for this book will also give the number (see YogaOfThePlanets.com) but it is easy to do it by hand if one has the planet position. Examples are given below.

In the table following, look up the planet position and find the number. Note, the table is at the end of this section and it is quite narrow to facilitate reading on narrow screens. If you still cannot see the whole width of the table, rotate your device to Landscape or pinch in until you can see the whole table.

For example, suppose the planet is at Virgo 5 degrees. 5° is between $3^{\circ}20'$ and $6^{\circ}40'$ so look in the second column of numbers under $6^{\circ}40'$ in the row for Virgo. You will find the number 47. Then look in the book for the mantra numbered 47. In the main text, the number is given at the start of the commentary, after the mantra. In the lists at the end, the mantra follows the number. For the Moon, the mantra for 47 is ‘om muktidāya namah’.

This is the simplest application of the rule where the number is counted from the start of the zodiac. This can be called ‘God’s view’ as the beginning of the zodiac is the beginning of the chart from the point of view of the Creator. Thus, it is very powerful. However, there are other views. There is the count from the Moon, which gives the social or personal view.

There is the count from the Sun, which is like the view from our soul. Another important count is from the Ascendant, which relates to the body and health. Reciting the mantra we get from this count may help our health but if we feel sick we should always consult a medical professional.

We can make a count from any of the planets as the starting point. In Jyotisha (Vedic Astrology) there are systems of planetary cycles (periods), especially the famous Vimshottari Dashā system. All Vedic Astrology software like Shri Jyoti Star give these cycles too. Even some Western Astrology software or online software give them. For example, you might be running a Venus Moon cycle and subcycle. That means you are in the major cycle of Venus and the minor cycle of the Moon (called a Bhukti). In this example, one can count from Venus to the Moon and use the mantra from the Moon list.

For example, let us find the mantra for the Moon from the perspective of the Sun. Let us suppose the Sun is at $8^{\circ}10'$ Leo and the Moon is at $4^{\circ}30'$ Sagittarius. First find the number for the Sun from the table as we did above, which is 39, and then the number for the Moon from the table which is 74, as $4^{\circ}30'$ is greater than $3^{\circ}20'$ and less than $6^{\circ}40'$. Now subtract 39 from 74 and add 1, which gives you 36. Then find mantra 36 in the mantra list for the Moon. We add 1 because if both planets have the same number, the answer has to be 1, there is no mantra for zero. If the subtraction gives a negative value, just add 108 to the result.

Now you know how to find key mantras for your chart in general and for your Dashā cycles. I recommend you start with 'God's view' as this can be considered the most important.

(The table is on the next page)

Degrees up to

Sign	3°	6°	10°	13°	16°	20°	23°	26°	30°
	20'	40'		20'	40'		20'	40'	
Aries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Taurus	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Gemini	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Cancer	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Leo	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Virgo	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Libra	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Scorpio	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Sagittarius	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Capricorn	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Aquarius	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
Pisces	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108

THE ASTROLOGICAL HOUSES

In various places in this book you will find reference to houses or places from some important personal marker such as the Ascendant or the Moon. The simplest and traditional way of understanding this is in terms of the 12 signs of the zodiac, Aries, Taurus, etc. If the Moon is in Taurus, then Taurus is the first house or place from the Moon. Gemini is the second. Aries is the twelfth, etc. One only has to count round by signs. The Ascendant is in the sign rising on the Eastern horizon at the time of birth.

THE JOURNEY

On March 3rd, 1995, I entered the sacred and tranquil valley surrounding the small village of Kollur. I had fostered a desire to visit here for eight years since a friend told me about it. I did not know why I felt this connection but when I was finally able to travel to India I set my heart on reaching that place. It seemed very special and I must have feared going straight there in case my energy was unprepared. I chose to go first to Tamil Nadu on the opposite coast and to the great temple of Rāmeshvaram.

Rāmeshvaram is on the spit of land opposite Sri Lanka. This is the place Shri Rāma worshipped Lord Shiva before launching his campaign to recover his wife Sītā from the demon king. To cross the ocean, his army of monkeys and bears built a bridge or causeway across the ocean. This was many thousands of years ago but, amazingly, the remains of a causeway to Sri Lanka are still visible in satellite photos. According to temple records, Shri Rāma's bridge was passable being completely above the sea until destroyed by a cyclone in 1480 AD.

From Rāmeshvaram, I visited the great temple of Mīnakshī and thence to the very tip of India, Kanyakumari. This place has remarkable temples especially that of the Virgin Goddess. I rose and went at 3:30 am and was almost alone in witnessing the bathing of the Goddess in milk. It was the Full Moon day. A little later I did homage to the shrine for the Navagraha and received a distinct blessing. Prior to that I had done some study of Jyotisha but had received no authority from any Guru or other source to study and practice. This was a most unexpected Grace.

From Kanyakumari, I travelled up the Kerala coast visiting Ashrams and temples until I came to Kollur. It was a great moment, though for no obvious reason at all. Kollur is home to the famous temple of Devī Mookāmbikā, the Goddess of the mouth. It is said she grants blessings related to the voice and the arts. Most evenings, artists from all over India come to perform before her. They sing, dance and play instruments.

At the time I knew nothing about this temple. I did not know that astrologers from all over South India come here to pray and do penance for Vāk Siddhi, the power that whatever one says proves true. After all, people expect an astrologer to have this power. While, in rare cases, it is possible that a person is born with this, generally it only arises after long and sincere spiritual practice. This is why Vedic Astrology, Jyotisha, is primarily a spiritual discipline and one should seek a guru or gurus to guide one's spiritual and intellectual development.

The essence of success in an earthly endeavour is the Grace of the Goddess and for each aspirant there is some form that appeals to him or her and which can grant success.

There are rules for finding this form but ultimately it is very personal. I should make it clear that talk of gods and goddesses does not conflict with the monotheistic view because the Vedic view is that the One takes whatever form we desire or can be approached as purely formless if that is our path.

The worship of the Goddess in India is, at its peak, related to the *Shrī Vidyā* and the *Shrī Chakra*. The great sage and teacher Adi Shankarāchārya installed a *Shrī Chakra* under the deity in the *Mookāmbikā* temple. After some time in Kollur, I came to know that he also installed a *Shrī Chakra* at the top of the highest mountain nearby where the root shrine of the Goddess is to be found. Part of the pilgrimage is to walk to the top of this mountain. It is about 12 miles or one can take the bus part of the way and walk the last 3-4 hours. I had many extraordinary experiences on this mountain as well as in the temple, which I will write about elsewhere.

While I was staying at the temple, somehow I conceived of this book. It seemed to me that the sets of 108 names of the *Grahas* (planets) were important and used by astrologers but I could find no trace of a translation or commentary. So I started making notes. When I could not understand a word, I discussed it with my friend UmaShankar Jois who is one of the distinguished priests at the temple. He studied *Jyotisha* with a great Guru though he passed away before my friend's studies were complete. UmaShankar is a great expert in the remedial measures and he felt I had some knowledge on the analysis of charts so we spent a lot of time discussing *Jyotisha* together.

I stayed at Kollur for more than 40 days, as is the custom, and then went for *Shivarātri* in Varanasi. This is the greatest festival for Lord Shiva and Varanasi is considered the city of Shiva, and is one of the most profound places to celebrate it. As I was about to leave Kollur, I went to the temple to take Her leave to go. The priests put me at the front during the *Arti* (ritual waving of lights before the shrine), which is the peak of the evening worship. Then I got on the bus to go to Bangalore where I could catch a train for the North.

As it happened, the conductor of this bus was part of a ring of thieves who stole the luggage of innocents like me. I arrived in Bangalore without anything, all my notes were gone. Still I managed to continue my journey and reached Varanasi, the great city of Shiva, at 4 am on *Shivarātri*. I washed and went straight to the temple having no luggage to concern me. Standing in the queue I noticed that I was the only male wearing traditional clothing. There was a guard on the door and they often turn 'tourists' away. He looked me over for a while and then enthusiastically said 'om namaḥ śivāya' and waived me in.

The next year, I returned to Kollur with another notebook. I started by writing down all that I remembered and naturally found that my understanding had improved over the year and quickly was ahead of my previous work. When I left Kollur after another 40+ days I had just

a few names which I could not decipher. I visited Prof. Ramachandra Rao in Bangalore who was one of the two people that I found who had published the lists of the names. We had an interesting discussion. He was a very great scholar. Unfortunately, he has now passed away. Travelling through India I met many good scholars who kindly gave me their opinions so the meanings became clear. Since then, from time to time I wrote my small commentary. It reflects many stages in my own spiritual life. I hope you enjoy it.

In 2007, I visited a small house a few miles north of the great Konark temple. This temple, though now partially ruined, was perhaps India's greatest temple to the Sun god. It is built like a giant chariot. Some of the carvings are now in the British Museum including the large carvings of the nine Grahas (planets). The Konark temple stands near the beach in the North Eastern part of India's V shape so is one of the first places to see the rays of the rising Sun. Konark is some 20 miles north of Puri where the great Jagannātha temple of Lord Krishna is to be found administered by the Shankarāchārya of the East. He is charged with maintaining the *Rig Veda*, accepted as humanity's oldest recorded wisdom text.

About 500 years ago, the great spiritual teacher Chaitanya Mahāprabhu resided here and the lineages derived from him are still very widespread today, such as ISKCON. He had five 'sakhas' or friends, as they were called, one of which was Swāmi Achyutānanda. The Swāmi was initiated by the great teacher at an early age and went on to become the King's astrologer, a noted author of over 200 books and an enlightened sage. He also founded 13 schools in the region. These taught various sciences and several were dedicated to Jyotisha. When he was leaving his body, he promised to remain in a 'shunya' form. Shunya means the void and it is a term he explained in great depth in one of his books. It does not refer to mere nothingness but to a profound state of Being.

He kept his promise and even today you can go and consult him. That is where I was going. There is a small shrine and next to it are the quarters of a pandit who keeps and interprets a set of copper plates (tamra poti). These plates only contain some drawings like the shape of a lotus, but when you enter there with a question in your mind, the answer appears written in ancient Odia (the local language 500 years ago) and the pandit reads them for you. If you look, you can actually see the writing appear. I went there with several friends, all of whom were students of Pandit Sanjay Rath who is the last remaining person carrying the knowledge of the Jyotisha schools founded by the Swāmi. In effect, we had joined his lineage. The answers we got were remarkably pertinent and insightful. We were all given mantras. I later talked to a colleague who has taken over 40 people there and he said no one had ever been given a mantra.

The Swāmi told me to finish my book. I noticed that when I did the mantra, I would work more on this text. I hope he forgives me for the long time spent in fulfilling his instruction

but perhaps I or the time was not ripe before now. This year (2015) marks the 20th year since I started and only this year did I make the important discovery about the Vimshottari Dashā which is published in this book. In the derivation of the Vimshottari Dashā cycles or periods, the great significance of 20 years is revealed.

The name of the Sun temple is from Kona + Arka. Arka is a name of the Sun and Kona means trine. In Jyotisha, this indicates the Dharma Trikona, the sustainer of life, which I have written about in many places in this book and is so important in the interpretation of the Vimshottari Dashā.

NOTES ON PRONOUNCEMENT FROM THE TRANSLITERATION

In the transliteration, there are marks called diacriticals that aid correct pronunciation.

In Sanskrit there are long and short syllables. The long ones are to be sounded for twice as long as the short ones, even longer is OK. Vowels with a line over them like ‘ā’ and double vowels like ‘ai’ are all long. ‘ḥ’ (h with a dot under it) is pronounced like ‘ah’, that is with aspiration. It is often pronounced as ‘ahah’ but this is not recommended for mantras as it effectively adds another syllable and the syllable count of a mantra is important. ‘ś’ with an acute accent is like ‘sh’. For example, ‘śukraḥ’ is pronounced ‘shukrah’.

Consonants or sibilants with a dot under them like ṭ or ṣ are retroflex. For example, ṭ is pronounced as the ‘t’ in Tom. You curl your tongue back and strike your palate. ‘ṭ’ on the other hand is a dental sound. ‘ṭh’ is ‘t’ with some aspiration as are all the other syllables that have an ‘h’ like ‘bh’, ‘dh’ and ‘gh’. You just blow a little when saying the consonant.

The ‘ṛ’ such as in ‘bṛhat’ is a vowel in Sanskrit pronounced like the ‘ry’ in jewelry. ‘c’ is pronounced as ‘ch’, as in ‘change’. In the commentary, I usually use ‘ch’. If ‘ch’ appears in the transliteration, then it is like ‘chh’, which is ‘ch’ with some extra aspiration.

Please visit a Sanskrit learning web site or teacher for more detailed advice. One good site is learnsanskrit.org.

The Devanagari (Sanskrit) support on a PC is excellent but may not be so perfect on mobile devices. Older Kindle devices and other eReaders may not show it at all. One can always check against the transliteration, which should be correct.

Please note that the first time part of a mantra is mentioned in the following text, it is italicized. Sanskrit terms in the commentaries are often transliterated but not always according to the more rigorous scheme. Sometimes the more usual form is followed using the standard English alphabet.

HYMN IN HONOUR OF THE PLANETS

ॐ गं गणपतये नमः

om gam̄ gaṇapataye namaḥ

ब्रह्मा मुरारिस्त्रिपुरान्तकारी भानुः शशी भूमिसुतो बुधश्चा
गुरुश्च शुक्रः शनिराहुकेतवः सर्वे ग्रहाः शान्ति करा भवन्तु॥

brahmā murāristripurāntakārī bhānuḥ śaśī

bhūmisuto budhaśca |

guruśca śukraḥ śanirāhuketavaḥ sarve grahāḥ

śānti karā bhavantu ||

Brahmā (the Creator), Murāri (Vishnu, the Sustainer), Tripurāntakarin (Siva, the slayer of the demon Tripurāsura), Bhānu (the Sun), Shashin (the Moon), Bhūmisuta (Mars, the son of the Earth), Budha (Mercury), Guru (Jupiter), Shukra (Venus), Shani (Saturn), Rāhu and Ketu, may all these Grahas be peaceful.

CHANDRA, THE MOON

ॐ श्रीमते नमः

om śrīmataṁ namah

1. Salutations to the one possessed of all auspiciousness.

The Vedic Astrological chart shows one's level of *Shrī* or fortune. The chart is created by the movement of the Moon and its interplay with the Sun. In India, interpretation of the chart starts with the position of the Moon rather than the Sun for issues of personal experience and fortune. The Sun is like the soul because it moves steadily on in its course without variation. The Moon is like the mind as it rises and falls with its reflection of the sunlight. Among the main significations of the Moon are the mind and the mother.

In India, mothers and married women are addressed as *Shrīmati*. This is the feminine form of this name. The male form is *Shrīman*. The meaning is the same: one who is possessed of *Shrī* (pronounced Shree). *Shrī* indicates all kinds of auspiciousness. It is a name of Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth, victory and beauty and it also stands for the number 108. In Vedic Astrology, the zodiac is divided into 108 Padas or quarters. There are four for each Nakshatra or lunar mansion ($4 \times 27 = 108$), and nine for each Rāshi or sign ($9 \times 12 = 108$). This is the key division of the zodiac and is especially related to the movement of the Moon, which defines the Nakshatras.

The day is naturally divided into four parts. These are separated by sunrise, midday, sunset and midnight. The Moon moves through one Nakshatra each day (approximately), so we can say that the division of the Nakshatra into four parts or Padas follows naturally from the four-fold division of the day. As each sign contains nine Padas, this is the natural division of each zodiacal sign. The fact that there are 12 signs follows from the approximate rate of 12 full moons that occur in the course of a year. As the Moon is connected to the Nakshatras, the mother is seen from the fourth house. As the Sun is connected to the Rāshis, the father is seen from the ninth. In this way, the perfect synchrony of the Nakshatras and Rāshis gives rise to the core concepts of Jyotisha.

The Moon's cycle controls the growth of plants and human fertility. Research shows that people often relate human beauty to fertility. The Vedic texts connect beauty to auspiciousness. Of course, there is more to beauty and auspiciousness than physical characteristics or age-related fertility. The inner beauty that arises from a sweetness of consciousness is the deeper aspect of the meaning of this name. There is nothing more beautiful than a pure

heart. Later, we see how the Moon is related to Soma, the nectar of divine consciousness, which is the cause of inner sweetness.

ॐ शशधराय नमः

om śāśadharāya namaḥ

2. The one carrying the hare (*Shasha*).

This refers to the markings on the Moon that look like a hare, rabbit or deer. The Nakshatra called Mrigashira, or the head of a deer is ruled by Soma which is another name for the Moon. The connection with the deer or rabbit is not accidental. They are mild and timid animals that appear to be constantly searching. This is the nature of the mind, which is understood by studying the Moon in the Vedic astrological chart.

An old story has it that the markings are due to an incident where the Moon saw Lord Ganesha riding on his mouse. The Moon laughed and Ganesha broke off one of his tusks and hurled it at the Moon creating the marks. Everything about Ganesha is highly symbolic. His whole form is said to be a personification of the Om syllable. The mouse as the vehicle for such a vast body indicates the relationship between the small Jīva or personality and the infinite vastness of absolute consciousness. It also indicates the Divine consciousness controlling the plundering nature of the mind. The single tusk of Ganesha suggests the one-pointed nature of that consciousness in its absolute crystal clarity, as the mind's fluctuations no longer dominate experience.

ॐ चन्द्राय नमः

om candrāya namaḥ

3. The luminous one.

Chandra is the most common Sanskrit name for the Moon and luminosity is its most obvious feature.

ॐ ताराधीशाय नमः

om tārādhīśāya namaḥ

4. The first lord of the stars.

Tārā means star and is also the name of the wife of Jupiter who was stolen by the Moon. By *Tārā* and the Moon, Mercury was born. Later, the Moon restored her to Jupiter after the intervention of the creator *Brahmā*.

This name also means the ruler of the best of the stars. *Rohinī* has some claim to be the best Nakshatra. It is in the middle of Taurus and is fertile by nature. The Moon was given the 27 Nakshatras as wives but *Rohinī* proved to be the principal or favoured wife (Moon 20).

The question of gender arises when discussing the Moon. In the West, the Moon is referred to as ‘she’ and in Vedic Astrology, the Moon is ‘he’ but represents female things. The ancient Egyptians took the same view as the Vedic. I will use both genders out of respect for both traditions. In the Vedic view, every deity has a male and female component. The Sun may be considered male but he is always accompanied by his power or *Shakti*, his wife. The male is said to be incapable of accomplishing anything without the motivating force of the *Shakti*. Thus, they are always together.

The ancient *Manu Smriti*, the oldest extant law book we have, gives some interesting rules or advice for husbands and wives. It says the husband should always look to the happiness of the wife. The wife is advised to obey the husband and not argue. If the husband suggests something that she does not like, it advises that rather than say something, she should express it on the face. Whatever our role in a relationship, it is always helpful to watch carefully the face of the other person and enjoy its light as we appreciate the Moon at night.

The Moon, like the Sun, is a royal planet. Those people in whose Vedic chart these *Grahas* predominate need to be treated accordingly. Everyone deserves respect but the respect we pay to a preceptor (Jupiter person), a celebrity (Venus person), an intelligent or skilful person (Mercury), a warrior (Mars) or a good worker (Saturn) has its own energy.

ॐ निशाकराय नमः

om niśākarāya namah

5. The maker of the night (*Nishā*).

What is the night without the Moon? Just as the Sun is said to be *Dinakara* or the maker of the day, the Moon is the maker of the night. This name by its very sound conjures up the soothing moonbeams cooling the heated earth or the cool Moon hanging over fields and mountains covered in snow. It is so lovely that *Nishā* is popular as a girl’s name. *Nishā* also means a vision or a dream. They are the creations of the mind.

ॐ सुधानिधये नमः
om sudhānidhaye namah

6. The receptacle or abode (*Nidhi*) of nectar.

Sudhā means ease, comfort and the nectar of the gods, the Soma. The Moon is often associated with nectar and Soma is another of its names. After the heat of the day, its cooling beams have a nectar-like quality. The orb of the Moon is said to reside at the top of the spine and the Sun resides at the base. When the *Kuṇḍalinī* energy rises up and reaches the place of the Moon, drops of nectar start falling down from the disc of the inner Moon and nourish the entire bodily system, subtle and gross. Unawakened, circling at the base, the life force gradually dries up through our willfulness. Through complete inner surrender, the life force arises and remains perpetually risen.

Inner surrender cannot be described or converted into a formula. Egoistic tendencies have to be surrendered but that is not something one can simply choose to do. After all, who is choosing, who is doing? The simple truth is that one cannot transcend the mind by any effort of the mind. As Ramana Mahārishi said, the thief (the mind) will not arrest itself. That is why people meditate and pray in whatever way they choose to wear away their coarseness. When one is ready, one may meet a self-realized soul and she or he will help much more than one could ever understand. A great soul will pray to God on our behalf and that is the key, for such a prayer is always heard. It is very important that one does not speak ill of such great souls and if one takes such a guide, one simply does what they ask. We can, of course, ask questions and raise doubts. Every mentor is a Guru on some level. For some people, the guide may be a person. For others, it may be nature itself or one may feel guided from within.

There are no formulas here, everyone has to find their own way forward but it is helpful to understand the role of certain mental states. These are discussed here because the Moon represents the mind. The Moon is very sensitive and it is the influence of other planets on it that gives rise to these various states.

A. Fear. Fear is there to stop us from advancing. Every gate we approach has a guard. The guard has only the weapon of fear. That stops almost everyone. A few ignore the fear they feel and pass through that gate. There is a true story about a sage from the South of India, Shri Shivabalayogi Maharaj, who passed in 1994 shortly before I started to write this book. In his youth, he was engaged in very serious practices that required following a strict time schedule. Once a day, he would go to the nearby river to bathe and then return to continue his practice in his little hut. He had to resume by a certain time. One day he reached his hut to

find a very large cobra standing upright in the doorway blocking the path. He waited for it to move but it did not move away. When time was running out for him to resume his practice he stepped forward to enter the hut and the snake bit him. Inside the hut he collapsed and was unconscious for some time. He recovered and resumed his practice, which was to obtain the vision of Lord Shiva. After a short time, the vision came and around the Lord's neck was the self-same king of the snakes smiling at him.

Another great sage, who was an elder of and well-known to Shri Shivabalayogi, was Tapasvi Maharaj. He lived from the 1760s to the 1950s. He was a prince from Western India and at about the age of 60 he returned from combat to find his wife and son had died. Disgusted with fighting he rode to Delhi to request the Mughal Emperor to intervene to stop the fighting between the various small kingdoms. After some time, he obtained an audience. The Emperor was praying on his beads while the Prince talked. When he finished, the Emperor explained that his power was not sufficient to intervene but in any case he considered the life of a saint far superior to that of a king.

The Prince rode out of Delhi and when he came to the junction where the road to Rishikesh began, he turned North towards the Ganges (Gangā). Since time immemorial, those wishing to pursue the spiritual path have gone to the Gangā especially where it enters the Himalayas and beyond. Rishikesh is that gateway town. As he approached the river, he found his way blocked by a large snake. He dismounted, drew his sword but was unable to strike the snake as it moved too fast. The snake disappeared and he resumed his journey. After a short distance, again the snake was blocking the way. Again he failed to strike it. At this point, he realized this was no ordinary occurrence. He put down his sword, took off his helmet and bowed down before the snake. It observed him and then quietly withdrew. Shortly after that he reached the Gangā. He wrapped all his gold and jewellery in a pouch, which he hung on the neck of his horse. Then he began his quest wearing only his loin-cloth.

Such moments can happen to all seekers because the energy of awakening is snake-like and the final knot to be broken is guarded by the greatest fear, the fear of annihilation. The ego is facing its end and that is no small thing, or at least it appears so at the time. Afterwards, it is nothing, just like losing a mirage. The lunar nodes, Rahu and Ketu, are primarily connected to fear and awakening.

B. Distractions. The path to God is also guarded by various pleasure fields. The closer one comes, the more temptations are presented. One can be offered more and more of what the world considers valuable such as wealth, sex and power and, eventually, even mystical attainments like levitation. In the Yoga Sūtras (3.51), the great text of yoga, it warns the aspirant not to accept these offers, 'therein lies danger'. Most certainly, progress will end and regress is likely. There is a price for everything. It is good to clearly know what one has to pay before

taking anything from another. However, everyone has areas where it is hard to have crystal clarity. Rāhu and Ketu, in particular, create a smoke or covering that prevents us from seeing clearly.

It is wise to completely avoid black magic. There is a wonderful story of the great Tibetan master Milarepa. As a youth, some relatives cheated his family and took their land. He studied black magic and had his revenge by killing them all. Sickened by seeing what had happened, he approached a great master for spiritual initiation. The master ignored his request and just asked him to build him a house out of stone. Milarepa built the house and showed it to the master. He said that it was in the wrong place and asked Milarepa to move it slightly. This involved entire reconstruction. This was done, but again it was wrongly placed.

After building the house several times the disciple lost heart. He approached the wife of the master who also felt that her husband was being unkind and she sent him for initiation to a student of the master in another valley. The mantra he gave had no effect so this senior student asked if Milarepa had been granted permission from the master to learn. Hearing the story, he sent him back to the Guru. The master explained that if he had rebuilt the house one more time, his sins would have been exhausted and he would have gained enlightenment. As he had failed, he would obtain realization through meditation but it would take another 30 years. There are variations on this story but the idea is the same. For example, people with Ketu in the second house, owe a debt to the Gurus. They may well be sent on many fruitless errands. The master sees all the karma of the student. The student knows very little, usually nothing.

C. Confusion. At an early stage in the spiritual path one will have to face confusion. It is said that there is no greater obstacle than doubt. This is where faith in one's guide is very helpful. It is rather like having a really good GPS navigation system. Suppose one comes to a crossroads with no signpost and the way suggested by the system looks to be away from the direction one is going. If one accepts that the system is based on good maps and good programming, then one goes the way it suggests. Alternatively, one may feel doubtful and try all the other paths first. It all depends on one's faith. The Guru or guide will start by showing you in a clear way that what he or she suggests is right. Later, that help stops and then one has to accept that the earlier steps were right and so this new advice is also. The Guru is a reflector of one's own inner guide. Sooner or later, one has to find and follow that. Rahu causes doubts and questioning. Jupiter gives faith. Both have their own value. If one feels blocked by doubt, we can strengthen Jupiter (see the Jupiter names).

D. 'I am God'. As Jupiter represents God in the chart, a person whose chart is dominated by Jupiter can start to feel like this. When one experiences infinite consciousness, one dissolves in the ocean and then feels, 'I am the ocean'. However, the 'I' that speaks is not the ocean. It

is just an expression of that like all the individual ‘I’s. The knowing is true on its level but that cannot be translated into some concept about the ego. As Ramana Mahārishi said, there is nothing worse than a spiritual somebody.

This trap is hard to avoid because it is so subtle. Jupiter people are often deeply interested in spiritual wisdom. If the Sun is afflicted, then the trap is even more seductive. One may have a sense of unworthiness that is quite troubling. The automatic tendency is to compensate for this by trying to prove that one is worthy. The real answer is to recognize that worthiness and unworthiness are equally illusionary. The feeling of unworthiness is best patiently born as part of the scenery. Doing this without complaint, can bring immense rewards.

ॐ सदाराध्याय नमः

om sadārādhyāya namah

7. To be worshipped (*Arādhya*) always (*Sadā*).

Once the nectar starts flowing, bliss absorbs our attention and it is never lost because nothing else is more attractive. The giving of attention is true worship and true surrender. Without this, the attention is constantly seeking more happiness and jumps here and there. One whose attention is absorbed in the inner bliss is always worshipped by the subtle and gross beings in the universe. She takes nothing but is constantly radiating her joy.

ॐ सत्पतये नमः

om satpataye namaḥ

8. The lord (*Pati*) of truth and purity (*Sat*).

This name continues the commentary on that state of awakening. It tells us that the Moon indicates truth and purity in the chart. Through the associations and positions of the Moon, one can see to what extent this is found in the life of the individual. We evolve with time. As we mature, the finer values of the planets can blossom. If we feel stuck, mantras like these can help.

Every tough combination in an astrological chart, like the Moon with Saturn, suggests some outer disturbance (e.g. depression) but also has an inner promise (e.g. life in bliss). Those who have a more profoundly anchored inner life may not experience the outer effects to the same extent, and pass through the inner transformation promised even at a young age.

ॐ साधुपूजिताय नमः
om sādhupūjītāya namah

9. Worshipped (*Pūjita*) by the awakened.

Sadhu means those who have ‘done well’ with their lives. The Moon rules over those who lead a pure life. What is a pure life? Life is pure when the heart is free from anger and other disturbances. If anger arises, it can be channeled so that it turns into peace and auspiciousness. This starts by focusing the energy on the base of the spine from where the subtle channels rise up. Pay attention to the breath.

The state that everyone seeks is the state of eternal contentment. How is one to find it if one is not content with one’s current condition? One may be hoping that some switch will flip and then all the non-contentedness will disappear and one will be in bliss. However, it is more effective to gently let go of any sense of complaint while practically addressing whatever needs to improve in one’s life. Practicing appreciation for everyone and everything is most helpful. This is the nature of the saints. They serve mankind out of compassion.

The universe is constructed by another’s will as Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtras* (3.45) and Vyāsa’s commentary on it make clear³. An illumined sage will not manipulate this universe because he sees that it was created by another whose laws should be obeyed. However, the highest sages can choose to project their own. An aphorism in the *Sūtras* (3.50) describes how omnipotence arises and how, in the letting go of even that, the ‘seeds of evil’ are destroyed. The root seed of evil is clearly the option retained by the individual to interfere in the natural law. Abandoning that, all such seeds are roasted.

The astrologer has great power because of what he or she knows but it is the basic ethic that one never uses that power for one’s own end. One can show the client the reality, to whatever extent one is able. This vision causes the client to awaken and that is the remedy. All other remedies are subsidiary.

ॐ जितेन्द्रियाय नमः
om jitendriyāya namah

10. In perfect control of the senses (*Jitendriya*).

Satisfaction is the key to the control of the senses. However, lasting satisfaction cannot come about by any acquisition. It arises from the inner state of peace described throughout

these names.

The great sage Parāshara describes the Moon as ‘unsteady and love sick’. Ruling over the mind and the emotions, it wanders endlessly seeking satisfaction. This mantra is a remedy. Once the attention is caught in the sweetness of that state of surrender, the senses come to rest.

ॐ जयोद्योगाय नमः

om jayodyogāya namah

11. The one who is victorious (*Jaya*) through perseverance or continuous effort (*Udyoga*).

This also indicates success in business ventures or the carrying out of one's duty. The Moon often indicates those with public duties. These require perseverance and diligence. Jayodyoga also indicates the steadiness of the inner surrender. This is the ultimate victory.

The Moon has a wandering tendency and this mantra can serve as a remedy. In order to go beyond the mind, one needs to take up and maintain the practices given by one's Guru or mentor whether the Moon is waxing or waning. Sometimes this proves difficult. Calmly reestablish one's practices as soon as one can, without feeling dejected about any failing. Astrology shows when one will face difficulties like this. They are limited by the length of the cycles involved.

Practices evolve. If sitting for meditation turns into a process done with open eyes and movement, it is only natural for some. The key to practice is effortlessness. Even when some doing is involved, the gentler it is, the sweeter the effect. Gentler is closer to God. It is the essence of non-violence. The Universe may appear full of creation and destruction but its essence is exquisitely tender.

ॐ ज्योतिश्चक्रप्रवर्तकाय नमः

om jyotiścakrapravartakāya namah

12. The originator (*Pravartaka*) of the disc of light.

The words *Jyotish Chakra* pertain to both the *Svādhishṭhāna* or second Chakra and the *Anāhata* or heart Chakra. Whether the mind is quiet or busy with needless thoughts depends on the purity of the second Chakra. The Moon, being related to both sensuality and the feeling heart, naturally takes us into the realms of these Chakras. Pravartaka is also the arbiter. Lust can arise in the second Chakra while peace arises in the heart. Where we focus depends on

the Moon or mind.

We can also understand this name as reflecting how it is that the movement of the Moon through the Nakshatras gives rise to the astrological effects – the flow of life on Earth.

ॐ विकर्तनानुजाय नमः
om vikartanānujāya namah

13. The younger to the Sun (*Vikartana*), or near to him like a brother or sister.

This brings out the close relationship between the Sun and the Moon and indicates the lesser or dependent position of the Moon as the reflector of the Sun's light. The relative velocities of the planets must have been one of the first things observed by our ancestors and they are used in various fundamental ways in Jyotisha. For example, the order of lordship of the signs is based on the relative velocities. *Vikartana* also means to cut asunder or divide, while *Anuja* can mean before. This means that we put the Moon's sign Cancer before the Sun's sign Leo and divide the zodiac into two between them. Then the rest of the lordships are assigned in order of decreasing speed, which also indicates increasing distance from the Sun. Mercury rules two signs either side of Leo and Cancer. After that, Venus owns two signs, then Mars, Jupiter and Saturn each rule two. This is how Saturn owns the signs Aquarius and Capricorn opposite Leo and Cancer.

The velocity scheme is used to determine the planetary hours from which we derive the rulers and names of the days of the week. In this, the Sun replaces the Earth as the velocity of the Sun is actually the velocity of the Earth. The order of planets from the Sun gives the relative speeds and the Sun takes the position of the Earth between Mars and Venus. The Moon is the fastest of the celestial bodies. Taken slowest to fastest, this gives Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon as the lords of the hours. The hour or Hora of the Sun starts from sunrise on the first day of the week, which is called Sunday. The 25th hour from that is the first hour on the next day and is ruled by the Moon. The next day is ruled by Mars and so forth.

The core principles of Jyotisha are based on astronomy coupled with acute observations of life. For example, the basic division of the zodiac is one minute of arc and the rising point of the zodiac, the Ascendant, crosses one minute in the time of a single human breath. The standard unit of time in ancient India, was the ghati and that is how long it takes the Sun to cross one minute of arc. All ancient Vedic units of time were multiples or fractions of a single average breath.

This is akin to the measurements of distance like a foot or an inch. An inch was orig-

inally one thumb's width while a digit was a finger's breadth. In India, they used the angula, which is also a finger's breadth. Twenty-four angulas make a cubit. The cubit, the distance from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger was widely used throughout Classical Europe and the Middle East. The modern measure, the metre, was originally proposed by Christopher Wren in the UK and Gabriel Moulton in France to be defined based on a pendulum with a one second period. The second is one quarter of a typical human breath. The second as a unit of time was introduced to Europe by Al-Biruni, the great Muslim scholar who extensively studied the arts and sciences of India. Remarkably, these important measures are almost exactly related through two of mathematics' and nature's most important constants. The cubit is $e - 1$ feet. The metre is $6/\pi$ cubits. e is Euler's constant. Π is pi.

ॐ वीराय नमः

om vīrāya namah

14. The powerful one.

The Moon may be lesser than the Sun but we are immediately reminded that she is full of strength and vitality (*Vīra*). As the Moon waxes, life gets more vital. This is the traditional time for planting. Weeding is done during the waning phase, as the life force is withdrawing. The waxing and waning affects the tides of the ocean and people's behaviour. It is a very powerful force. Those ruled by the Moon may be gentle and yet they can also be true heroes.

ॐ विश्वेशाय नमः

om viśveśāya namah

15. The Lord (*Isha*) of all.

Vishva is the universe. It is all things and that which is all pervading. The power of the Moon is not confined to any category. All rulership involves the mind and the heart. It is impossible to function without these spheres indicated or ruled by the Moon. This also makes it clear that the mind rules life as there is no experience or action without its agency. Even though the soul witnesses the mind, the decisions are all made in the mind, and so it appears as the lord.

ॐ विदुषाम्पतये नमः

om viduṣāmpataye namah

16. The Lord (*Pati*) of the wise (*Vidus*) or learned ones.

This name shows that the Moon indicates the wise and learned. A pure heart and mind are a prerequisite to being truly wise.

ॐ दोषाकराय नमः

om doṣākarāya namah

17. Free (*Akara*) from reproach (*Doṣa*), faultless.

If the heart and mind are completely pure, there is no mistake. Since selfishness gives rise to all kinds of errors, relaxing that leads to purity of heart and renders one naturally free from mistakes. The nature of a mother is to care for the child without any calculation of self-interest. The stronger and less afflicted the Moon is in a person's chart, the more nurturing an attitude they are likely to have.

The influence of other planets on the Moon causes various degrees of Doṣa. For example, the influence of Saturn can make one introverted. If one can step back, one might realize that that is a kind of self-absorption and hinders our ability to care for others. The flip-side is that those whose Moon is influenced by Saturn can appreciate the suffering of others and are much benefitted by giving service to those in need. Further, the introspection and periods of retreat that it often leads to can be most beneficial. The influence of Mars can make one rather impatient and willful along with being very dynamic and even athletic. The influence of Rāhu, the Northern eclipse point, is capable of making one deeply empathetic. The downside is a tendency to be fearful and have a poor self-image. In India, the worship of the Goddess Durgā is recommended to overcome such difficulties. She carries many weapons so facing Her is an exercise in overcoming fear. If fear is not addressed one may feel the need to try and control one's circumstances, which can cause tension with others.

One small exercise for any kind of fear is to consider, "What is the worst thing that could happen?" Whatever it is, then one can review how one would cope with that. Eventually, one will get to a place where one says, "Yes, I can do this." The worst fear is usually around dying. Of course, death is inevitable but we have to find our own realization about it and whatever suffering we imagine might come along with life's end. Fear is rooted in the Doṣa, which is external to the soul. This name tells us that the natural state of the mind is free from Doṣa and thus, free from fear, anger and misery. Whatever emotions arise, there is always a part of one's awareness that is not disturbed. Repeating these names and meditating on them can gradually help.

Another meaning of this name is the creator (*Kara*) of the night or darkness (Doṣā). We can infer that the mind, which the Moon represents, is the source of both fault and faultlessness. As it is often said, it is all in the mind.

ॐ दुष्टदूराय नमः
om duṣṭadūrāya namah

18. Far away (*Dūra*) from wickedness (*Duṣṭa*).

A pure mind is free from sin. It is important to accept that we can only find a fault in another, if that fault lies in us. If a public figure makes repeated speeches condemning certain behaviour, then that is surely that person's problem. The ancients believed that the greatest praise that a person can be given is that they were never heard speaking ill of anyone.

ॐ पुष्टिमते नमः
om puṣṭimate namah

19. Nourishing (*Puṣṭiman*).

Puṣṭi is also breeding and rearing and is related to the Moon's connection with the womb and motherhood as a whole. It is about growing and increasing. The Moon is the principal energy for growth and is known to influence the growth of plants. It indicates strength and plumpness. Later in life, lunar energy can create a certain roundness.

Puṣṭi is also indicative of wealth, property, means of comfort, richness, magnificence, development and perfection. *Man* indicates the possession of these. The centre of the lunar sign, Cancer, is the Nakshatra Pushya (Puṣya), a name that is derived from the same root and indicates blossoming.

ॐ शिष्ठपालकाय नमः
om śiṣṭapālakāya namah

20. He protects (*Pālaka*) the learned and the wise (*Shiṣṭa*).

The Moon is connected to teachers. The Nakshatra Pushya in the centre of the Moon's sign Cancer has as its Vedic ruler Brhaspati, the Guru of the gods. He is said to reside in the Great Bear (Ursa Major). This contains the stars the Vedas call the Sapta Rishi or seven seers,

which fall in Pushya. These stars are said to be the seven great Gurus who guide the welfare of mankind. Their wives, except for one, Arundhatī, reside in the Pleiades, the group of six stars in Krittikā Nakshatra, in the sign of Taurus.

The six wives were exiled due to a suspicion of infidelity with the fire god Agni, later disproved. The one wife, Arundhatī, who remained with her husband Vasiṣṭha, did so due to her extreme chastity. No one could even question her, showing how purity can overcome even the worst destiny. Arundhatī is Alcor, the smaller star in the double star in Ursa Major. Pushya is said to be good for everything except marriage because of fidelity issues or fears related to this constellation.

Both Taurus and Cancer are related to the Moon. The Moon is exalted in Taurus where it is most fertile. The exaltation occurs in Krittikā, which is followed by Rohinī, which is said to be the Moon's favourite Nakshatra. It is actually true that in many months the Moon can take a little longer to cross Rohinī than other constellations. Rohinī is connected to the sowing of seed.

The story goes that the Moon was married to the 27 Nakshatras, the daughters of the progenitor Dakṣa. Seeing him favouring Rohinī, Dakṣa cursed the Moon with a disease that causes degeneration. As the world was being deprived of the light of the Moon with its nectar and growth energy (Puṣṭi), the gods appealed to Dakṣa. He modified the curse to be an alternation of growth and decay, waxing and waning.

Pushya, the centre of Cancer, is related to the public role of ruling and guiding. It has a caring energy due to the Moon's motherly characteristic. Its planetary ruler is Saturn⁴, which stands for democracy. However, it carries the weight of authority. Its deity, Bṛhaspati, is not only hailed as the Guru of the gods but is also said to be the lord of the great (Jupiter 97) and the lord of all (Jupiter 105). While Taurus bears, nourishes and holds, Cancer can guide, care and protect those who follow faithfully.

The Divine Mother is said to be Gurumurti or the One taking embodiment as the Guru. Thus, every Guru is an appearance of the Divine Mother. The true Guru is the perfect integration of power and absolute tenderness. The great souls have a fully developed inner feminine. They are always tender and gentle while surgically cutting the roots of ignorance in those who surrender at their feet. The principal place of the Guru is in the sign of the Mother, Cancer. Jupiter is exalted here in the lunar mansion Pushya. This exalted Jupiter is fully exemplifying Gurumurti.

ॐ अष्टमूर्तिप्रियाय नमः

om aṣṭamūrtipriyāya namaḥ

21. Beloved (*Priya*) of Shiva and of the whole of nature.

Lord Shiva is hailed as *Aṣṭamūrti*. He is so fond of the Moon that he adorns His head with her. *Aṣṭamūrti* can indicate the whole of nature that is eightfold. In the Vedas, it speaks of this eightfold nature. These eight always include the five great elements, earth, water, fire, air and space. The other three can be taken in various ways such as the mind, intellect and ego or the Sun, the Moon and the initiator of sacrifice (*Yajamānas*). This is not different because the Sun indicates the ego, or fundamental sense of individual existence, the Moon is the mind and the *Yajamānas* is the intellect that decides the steps to be taken. Life itself is the sacrifice. All of the relative existence is made up of the intermixture of these eight.

The Moon is dear to nature, as she is the cause of its growth and development. Everyone feels a fondness for the mother principle, wherever one finds it. This helps to protect the most crucial of natural functions.

The *Sāma Veda* is the second principal text of the Vedas, after the *Rig*. It is largely comprised of sung hymns from the *Rig Veda*. In the *Sāma*, it says that when the eightfold melts into oneness, it cries: ‘Ashta rodati’. It cries because its nature as eight is being broken down into oneness. As soon as the boundary or the attachment to the differentiation is relaxed, waves of bliss are produced. From that arises *Jyoti* or the light of life. In this way, the *Sāma Veda* describes our evolutionary experience. Every time we let go of some issue or attachment, there is an internal or even external crying, and then a wave of relief that can turn into pure joy. Life gets a little lighter, a stage more enlightened. This is the process of awakening.

No issue is worth hanging on to, however precious, because that is enough to sustain the addiction to difference and keep the full light of life hidden. Lord Shiva exemplifies the state beyond difference. He, that state itself, carries the experience of difference mediated by the Moon or the mind on his forehead as a slim crescent. It is there as a mere decoration and in its most refined or minimized form. The crescent Moon’s presence means that in the enlightened state there exists just enough of the mind to maintain experience without all its wavering or craving tendencies.

ॐ अनन्ताय नमः

om anantāya namah

22. The endless (*Ananta*).

While ever waxing and waning, the Moon continues. So does the mind or the activity

of nature.

ॐ कष्टदारुकुठारकाय नमः
om kaṣṭadārukuṭhārakāya namah

23. The axe (*Kuthāraka*) cutting the tree of misery (*Kaṣṭadāru*).

The mother is always there to wipe the tears of the children. The type of ruler indicated by the Moon is committed to relieving the suffering of the people. The compassion of the Guru strikes at the root of the illusion, which we mistakenly buy into and from which, ultimately, all our suffering comes. We long for union because our individual egos are so many fragments of the great Mother seeking the great Father, the eternal Oneness. First, one identifies the goal externally and try many things to attain it. Along the way, one faces many difficulties because what we seek has to be sought in competition with others. These troubles make us lose interest gradually in the outer stuff of life and eventually we realize that the goal must be within. At this stage, we are coming close to realizing the ultimate truth.

ॐ स्वप्रकाशाय नमः
om svaprakāśāya namah

24. Shining by the light (*Prakāsha*) of the Self (*Sva*).

The Sun represents the self. The Moon shines by the light of the Sun just as the mind sees by virtue of the fact that we exist. *Svaprakāsha* can also mean self-illuminated, in the sense of not illuminated by another. In the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali, it argues that while the mind is not self-illuminated, it arises out of the heart, which, being identified with pure consciousness, shines as the Self. Therefore, the Moon represents the mind and the heart.

ॐ प्रकाशात्मने नमः
om prakāśātmane namah

25. Whose very soul (*Atman*) is shining (*Prakāsha*) or is light itself.

The soul or essence of the Moon or mind is the pure light of Being. Moon 24 and 25 indicate that someone with a strong and unafflicted Moon in their Vedic astrological chart naturally shines with the light of the Self. It is a characteristic of Divine Incarnations like Shri Rāma and Shri Krishna that they have a strong Moon in the first house of the chart. That

means the Moon was rising over the Eastern horizon at the time of birth.

ॐ द्युवराय नमः

om dyucarāya namah

26. Moving (*Chara*) in the heavens.

This also means that the Moon is sometimes seen during the day (*Dyu* - daylight) and that when it moves it shines (*Dyu* - brightness). This also illustrates how the inherently unmoving absolute moves within itself and that movement causes a glow or light. That is how it is both darkness and light at the same time. Its unmoving characteristic is often known first and then it appears to be total darkness. When the absolute's inner dynamism awakes in our awareness, then it shines. First, one knows silence. As one gets used to that silence, one comes to know its inner dynamics. This happens by itself, it just takes some time. This is the same process as described in all the creation stories as in Genesis in the *Bible*, and in the *Manu Smriti* in the Vedic literature. In the beginning, there was darkness and void and then there was light.

The Biblical story of the genesis is like the Big Bang theory where the universe appears out of nothing. Physics has shown that the absolute zero of the vacuum of space, which is empty, is full of virtual dynamism so that in certain special circumstances, it glows.

In the process of enlightenment, first the inner silence and its dynamics are known. Then the dynamism 'within' is allowed to stop or 'die'. This is to return to the Pure Being but it is not the same as the earlier stage. This is the ultimate letting go. Nothing except absolute truth and pure knowing remain without any sense of individuality. It just is.

ॐ देवभोजनाय नमः

om devabhojanāya namah

27. The food (*Bhojana*) of the gods (*Deva*).

The gods are said to owe their immortality to drinking the Soma or nectar. In the ninth Maṇḍala or section of the *Rig Veda* it repeatedly says 'Indu flow for Indra'. Indu is the Soma and is another name for the Moon. Indra is the chief of the gods, and symbolizes the wholeness of our own consciousness. The flow of the Soma is invoked for our nourishment. This name elaborates on the previous one. It is the movement of the immoveable that generates the Soma and that causes the glow. The impact on the body is the creation of Ojas (Sun 43

and 69), so the skin shines. Ojas is basic to the immune system, just as Soma is that which sustains the gods or natural law. It has been called the glue of the universe.

When the immovable is not known, then the physiology ages and even society degrades. When some members of society are living in the bliss of truth, then it sustains the integrity of their environment. This is described in the scriptures and is intuitively understood everywhere. Hence, spiritual communities have always attracted public support in the expectation that they would cultivate this in themselves.

ॐ कलाधराय नमः

om kalādharaṁya namaḥ

28. Having (*Dhara*) digits (*Kalā*).

The Moon as it waxes and wanes is said to have digits. As we only see the Moon for part of each 24 hours, each time it appears it is a little less or a little more. These digits are related to the Tithis or lunar days. There are almost 30 days between full Moons, so there are 15 digits or lunar days in each half of the lunar month: the waxing and the waning. Each Tithi has a goddess or divine energy associated with it. The worship of these, called Nityās, is a key part of the elaborate ritualized practice of Tantra in India. That is why the great mantra is said to have 15 syllables (Panchadashi) or 16 (Shodashi) if one counts the junction point between the two halves, a transcendental point. Though they are related, the mantra one finds commonly written is not the mantra that is given to the initiate. I have observed that it is very important to learn the Shodashi only after one has been practicing the Panchadashi for an extended period of time. The Shodashi mantra is complex and intended for renunciates.

ॐ कालहेतवे नमः

om kālahetave namaḥ

29. The cause (*Hetu*) of time (*Kāla*).

The Vedic calendar is based on the lunar month so in this sense the motion of the Moon defines time. Unless the mind moves, there is no sense or experience of time. When the mind stops, we are simply resting in eternity, pure consciousness. This is Samādhi in which 100 years seems to be not even a moment. It is highly analogous to Einstein's Theory of Relativity. A body moving at the speed of light, like light itself, knows no time and no change.

ॐ कामकृते नमः
om kāmakṛte namah

30. The maker (*Kṛt*) of pleasure (*Kāma*).

Kāmakṛt is the creator of desire as well as pleasure. Ordinarily, desire torments us with a sense of needing something. On the other hand, when the silent mind is just starting to move there is a ripple of bliss. It is a wave of the pure consciousness, stirred by the movement of the mind. All real joy arises in the same way, from a movement out of or within silence. Comparatively, the pleasure that arises when we get what we want is so slight and brief to be scarcely worth calling pleasure, even though this pleasure is also provided by the mind.

The Moon stands above the spinal column at a high point of the path of the Goddess Kuṇḍalinī. When She reaches there, then the orb starts to drip nectar. This nourishes the whole body and is indescribably sweet.

ॐ कामदायकाय नमः
om kāmadāyakāya namah

31. The giver (*Dāyaka*) of pleasure.

Kāma is pleasure, sensuality, desire, longing and the Moon causes or imparts this. Moon 30 says that she creates desire. This name has the sense of fulfilling it. *Kāma* is also a name for the Cupid.

ॐ मृत्युसम्हारकाय नमः
om mr̥tyusamhārakāya namah

32. The destroyer (*Samhāraka*) of death (*Mṛtyu*).

If there was any doubt about the meaning of the previous name (31), this makes it clear that the pleasure referred to was the dripping of the Soma or nectar, as this is the cause of the destruction of death. The Soma is said to be the nectar of immortality. It comes with the arising of a state of consciousness that is eternal (Moon 22 and 30).

Mahārishi Parāshara describes the Moon as ‘love sick’, which is a translation of Madana. This can mean lust but primarily it means delighting, exhilarating (literally ‘madden-

ing') or intoxicating. This is how one feels when the delight of that nectar starts flowing. The flow of the nectar within averts death, the body starts to shine and ageing is delayed.

ॐ अमर्त्याय नमः

om amartyāya namah

33. Immortal.

Amartya refers to a state of consciousness that is capable of moving without moving. It is a state that never dies. It is beyond the body, both its subtle and gross forms. This name can be used to support a theory that the mind, or some aspect of it, is carried from life to life. People do remember mental images and information from previous lives. I do, and there is abundant research evidence for that⁵.

ॐ नित्यानुष्ठानदायकाय नमः

om nityānuṣṭhānadāyakāya namah

34. Causing (*Dāyaka*) the regular (*Nitya*) practice of religious rites or austerities (*Anuṣṭhāna*).

Like all these names, this one has an outer and an inner indication. The outer indication is clear. The Moon in the chart shows the propensity for such practice and the course of the Moon defines the religious calendar. All the practices are regulated by the lunar months and sequence of days. One living in a state where there was a continuous flow of inner Soma nourishes the whole of nature. This consciousness is truly *Nitya* or eternal.

In Vedic times, a Soma Yāga or ritual was performed at the beginning of the lunar year and was said to sustain the gods. It is believed that if the regular practice of the Soma Yāga stops, then the climate will go out of balance and disaster will befall mankind. These days, the performance has become very rare, maybe once or twice in a decade. Some experts are still there to do it but it requires considerable funds though the amount is entirely insignificant compared with the cost of even a very small drought. With the rising challenge of climate change, I hope donors will come forward to sponsor these Yāgas.

ॐ क्षपाकराय नमः

om kṣapākarāya namah

35. Fasting.

Kṣapā is the night, *Kara* is to create. *Kṣapa* is fasting, abstinence or performing penance. *Akara* suggests abundance. One simple meaning is the creator of the night, while the other is frequent or repeated fasting. Naturally, we fast at night; at least we should for good health. In addition, most fasting is done according to the lunar or the solar-lunar calendar. Ramadan is based on a purely lunar calendar while Lent and fast days in India are based on the solar-lunar calendar, where each month runs from New Moon to New Moon or from Full Moon to Full Moon. In either case, there are 30 lunar days in a month and is equivalent to about 29½ calendar days. For example, many people fast on the Ekadashi. This is the 11th Tithi or lunar day.

The inner indication is related to identification. The mind experiences its objects through the senses. In the process, if the awareness of the pure consciousness or the unmoving element is lost then the mind eats, as it were, its objects and becomes dull. The enlightened experience the world but are not lost in it. This is true fasting or abstinence. It promotes crystal clarity.

ॐ क्षीणपापाय नमः

om kṣīṇapāpāya namah

36. Thinning or destroying sinfulness.

This elaborates on the benefits of fasting as just described (Moon 35). When the Moon wanes, the emotional body appears to become increasingly dark. This can make for unhappiness or rather a frustrated willfulness. Gently resting inside that darkness awakens the real light of life. One lets go of the demand that one should feel this or that. This demand is the *Pāpa* or sin.

As the Moon waxes we enjoy the rising energy in everything. As it wanes or becomes increasingly *Kṣīṇa*, letting go and letting be internally dissolves whatever identification or illusion arose in the waxing phase.

ॐ क्षयवृद्धिसमन्विताय नमः

om kṣayavṛddhisamanvitāya namah

37. Waning and waxing.

Kṣaya means decline and *Vṛddhi* means increase. *Samanvita* means possessed of. These follow in a natural sequence. Wherever the Moon appears in the chart, the significa-

tions must alternatively increase and decrease. For example, if the Moon is in the eleventh house of gains, then the income can fluctuate. It is well-known to gardeners that one should plant in the waxing phase and weed in the waning phase. The waning phase provides a critical service in the overall progress of life. If one's income decreases then one naturally starts trimming unnecessary areas of expense, helping future prosperity.

ॐ जैवात्रकाय नमः
om jaivātṛkāya namah

38. Increasing longevity.

Jaiva is that which belongs to the individual soul. *Atṛ* increases. *Ka* pertains to or causes *Jaivātṛ*. The principle possession of the individual soul is a certain span of longevity. This is initially given by the parents, primarily the mother indicated by the Moon. Since the Moon rules the natural fourth house, the mother gives $\frac{1}{4}$. As the father is seen in the ninth house, he gives $\frac{1}{9}$. The sum of these two is $\frac{13}{36}$. If we say that the body can live for 100 years, then $100 \times \frac{13}{36}$ is about 36 years. It is well known that the strength of the body builds up to about 35 and then starts declining. I remember being told this when I was about 30 and the amazement when I experienced the exact truth of it. Up to age 35, one feels so strong that the idea of decline seems impossible.

The Moon's beneficial associations and afflictions in the Vedic chart are seen for judging the longevity as well as the entirety of the individual's experience of life. If a combination in the Vedic chart suggests some outcome and it is not associated with the Moon, then it may never be experienced. This is why the Moon is given primary importance by many astrologers in India.

ॐ शुचये नमः
om śucaye namah

39. Innocent and undefiled (*Shuci*). Also a true and faithful friend; the sentiment of love; brilliant and shining; one who has acquitted her duty.

All these are attributes of the Moon. In the Vedic literature it is said that women are very pure because each month their impurities are discharged through the menses. Further, it says that a chaste woman has a special power, that whatever she says will come to pass. Therefore, wise people pay such women great respect. Such a one can bless and also, even unintentionally, curse. The great saint of India, Rāmakrishna Paramahārīsa once said about

his wife, Shri Sharadā Devī, ‘If God is angry with you, I can save you, but if she is angry with you, no one can save you.’

ॐ शुभ्राय नमः

om śubhrāya namah

40. Shining. Radiant.

Shubhra also means the colour white and white sandalwood, which is an article that can be offered in the worship of the Moon and the Goddess along with white flowers.

ॐ जयिने नमः

om jayine namah

41. Naturally victorious (*Jayin*).

One with a pure mind cannot be defeated; all the forces of nature will protect him even if he will not protect himself. One of my favourite stories is about a monk who was an ardent follower of St Francis. One day he arrived in a village just after a murder had taken place. Seeing a stranger, they seized him and asked him if he was guilty. He said something to the effect of “surely, I am a sinner.” So they rushed him to a tree and prepared to hang him.

The monk simply accepted everything as God’s will and said nothing. Just as they were about to carry out the punishment, another person arrived in the village who was acquainted with the monk. He immediately stopped them. These sudden swings of fortune had no effect on the mind of the monk. He accepted everything as the will of God.

ॐ जयफलप्रदाय नमः

om jayaphalapradāya namah

42. Giving the fruit (*Phala*) of victory (*Jaya*).

The Moon often indicates politicians. Astrologically, it is the Queen, so it can indicate rulership. This is the fruit of victory in the world as victory is an essential ingredient in acquiring and sustaining leadership. In particular, if a strong Moon rises in the chart of a person seeking higher office, she will be hard to beat. President Barack Obama has an exceptionally strong Moon. It does not rise but it is in the 5th house of power and was fully activated by the

Jupiter Moon Dashā at the time of his first Presidential election.

Such victories give temporary results. The real victory is coming into a true relationship with one's mind and emotions.

ॐ सुधामयाय नमः

om sudhāmayāya namah

43. The container of nectar or a nectar-like structure such as a royal palace.

Sudhāmaya can also mean a watery place, especially a lake or river. These are two of the Moon's principal indications. It also signifies white or white-washed buildings.

ॐ सुरस्वामिने नमः

om surasvāmine namah

44. The lord (*Svāmin*) of the immortals (*Sura*: the gods or natural laws).

This indicates the important place of the Moon in regulating natural law, such as through the tides and the growth of things, the menstrual cycle and the very real effect of the lunar cycle on everyone.

ॐ भक्तानामिष्टदायकाय नमः

om bhaktānāmiṣṭadāyakāya namah

45. She fulfills (*Dāyaka*) the desires (*Iṣṭa*) of the devotees (*Bhakta*).

Whether the Moon represents the queen, the Goddess or our earthly mother, she has to fulfil our desires if we surrender to her. If we are full of our self-importance, she will give to us but it may be delayed. If we ask the Mother Goddess for something that we cannot acquire with our present body, then we may have to take another birth to be able to receive it, so if we ask intently in a holy place, we may die soon. From Her perspective this is a minor inconvenience. We are so attached to whatever body we have that we find this idea hard to bear. Even flies and mosquitoes try to save themselves. Such is the depth of the survival instinct and the identification with the body.

ॐ भुक्तिदाय नमः
om bhuktidāya namah

46. The giver (*Da*) of enjoyments.

Bhukti is not just the objects of pleasure but also the mood of naturally enjoying.

ॐ मुक्तिदाय नमः
om muktidāya namah

47. The giver (*Da*) of liberation (*Mukti*).

Whatever the nature of the desire, She can grant it. One of the names of Lalitā, the playful form of the Goddess, is BhuktiMuktiPradāyinī. This means the giver of Bhukti (enjoyment - literally 'eating') and Mukti (spiritual freedom). Note the order: First the entertainment and then the liberation. Some people think that by acquiring liberation (of which they have only a misconception) they will 'fix' their lives and acquire the enjoyments they crave. However, to achieve Mukti, one must completely let go of all craving. After that, nothing remains that has to be acquired. All the pleasures may present themselves but there is no grasping for them, they just remain as they are.

Tulsīdās was one of India's greatest poet saint. As the story goes, in his youth, Tulsīdās was totally intoxicated with his new wife. He could not get enough of their relationship. After some time she tired of it and made an excuse to go for the night to her parents' house. During his night alone, he became so desperate that he got up and went to that house, crossing a river using a dead body and climbing to her window by the help of a large snake. This is how the story was written to make clear the mind of Tulsīdās. He was so focused on his goal that he paid no heed to the external details of what he was doing. His wife saw his state and, doubtless without any regard for the consequences, she said that if he was as devoted to God as he was to her, he would easily be in the Divine presence. This stopped him in his tracks and he immediately abandoned his householder life and took to meditation. As she had predicted, he became one of India's greatest devotees.

Tulsīdās wrote the story of Shri Rāma in the vernacular. When he first showed his book to the great pandits of Varanasi, they were aghast. The story had only been available in Sanskrit. There was such opposition and demands for the book to be burnt that he said "Let God decide". It was decided that the book would be left before Lord Shiva in the temple and

if He put his mark on it during the night that would show that it was fit for publication. If not, Tulsīdās was ready to be killed. The pandits agreed. The temple was locked and guarded. In the morning, there was a clear mark of a trident having been pressed into the front of the book. Tulsīdās' *Rāma Charita Mānasa* is one of India's most popular books even today.

ॐ भद्राय नमः

om bhadrāya namah

48. Auspicious and fortunate (*Bhadra*).

The sight of the Moon is always welcome and when astrologers are asked a question they consider the Moon as a marker of good fortune. Motherhood and married women are also considered very auspicious.

ॐ भक्तदारिद्र्यभञ्जनाय नमः

om bhaktadāridryabhañjanāya namah

49. Dispelling (*Bhañjana*) the poverty (*Dāridrya*) of the devotees (*Bhakta*).

Wealth is associated with the Goddess Lakshmī and people pray to her for wealth. She is normally associated with Venus but Parvatī, who is associated with the Moon, can equally destroy our poverty. The mother is always ready to give to the child. If the Moon is strong and unafflicted in the astrological chart, the person is unlikely to be poor. Of course, there are other factors to consider but a good Moon indicates a strong mind and this is generally sufficient for a person to achieve what they desire.

ॐ सामगानप्रियाय नमः

om sāmagānapriyāya namah

50. Fond (*Priya*) of the songs (*Gāna*) of the Sāma Veda.

The Sāma Veda is sung, other Vedas are chanted. The Sāma is said to be the actual sounds of nature's functioning as we could experience it. These vibrations were heard by the ancient Rishis (seers). They are also the sounds of the transformations of consciousness and are sung to facilitate the process of awakening. Therefore, it is natural for the Guru to encourage the chanting of the Sāma Veda in the presence of the disciples.

Many of these names can be seen as referring to an enlightened teacher or Guru. If the Moon is associated with Jupiter at birth, one may look for a Guru. Jupiter is at its best in Cancer, the sign of the Moon.

ॐ सर्वरक्षकाय नमः

om sarvarakṣakāya namah

51. Protecting (*Rakṣaka*) everything and everyone (Sarva).

This is the role of the Divine. The enlightened protect all those who associate with them be they human or of another species. The mother protects her children and the Moon protects everyone by regulating the growth of plants and the water cycles of nature.

ॐ सार्गरोद्भवाय नमः

om sārgarodbhavāya namah

52. Born (*Udbhava*) of the ocean (Sargara).

There is an interesting scientific theory that suggests that the Moon separated from the Earth creating the Pacific Ocean. Sāgara is the ocean or sea and it also indicates the numbers four and seven. The Moon rules over the fourth sign, Cancer, a water sign and it could be said that the heart gets fulfilled in marriage seen in the seventh house. This is because the seventh is the fourth from the fourth house. Certainly, marriage or partnership is the basis of motherhood and is the most essential aspect of human existence.

The mind arises out of the ocean of consciousness and this was illustrated in the wonderful story of the Samudra Manthana or the churning of the ocean. In this story, the gods and the demons cooperated in churning the ocean of milk (consciousness) to obtain the nectar of immortality (Soma). Many things arose but one was Chandra, the Moon, which was given as an adornment to Lord Shiva. Later the Amrita or Soma arose. This story makes a distinction between Chandra and Soma. Soma emerges from the internal disc of Chandra when the consciousness reaches a sufficient level. To enliven this, Chandra is worshipped as Soma.

ॐ भयान्तकृते नमः

om bhayāntakṛte namah

53. Bringing (*Kṛt*) an end (*Anta*) to fear (*Bhaya*).

Fearfulness goes with a mind and emotions ungrounded in the steadiness of truth or the inner calm. A good ruler also removes fear from the followers or subjects. Fear tends to arise from instability. As the Moon waxes and wanes, these mantras help us find the stable place within this continuous change.

Fear and faith are mutually incompatible. Fear rises up and tries to drive out faith. Faith, being essentially pure, does not fight with fear but if we hold onto faith, she will not allow fear to take over. Suppose one is faced with a ghost or any type of terrifying situation. If one gives way to fear, one can even die of heart failure. If one says, “I trust in God, if He wishes, I will not be harmed. Whatever He wishes I accept”, then fear has no hold and one’s faith will be rewarded.

Often problems arise in human relationships because of a lack of faith. If one has seen that one’s partner is to be trusted, then, when one is gripped with fear or anxiety, one should give him or her one’s trust consistently. Forgetting this has been the cause of countless disasters. Fear pushes one towards panic and that is when one can make serious mistakes. The answer is to find a way to relax or put one’s faith in someone who is calm and known to be competent. Most people find this difficult because fear is so compelling. It may help to practice facing one’s predominant source of fear in a very safe place so we can stay calm. This is like the people who are afraid of spiders who attend a course to overcome the fear. Within a few days, they are calmly handling poisonous spiders. A trusted person has taken them through a process of gradually overcoming the fear.

ॐ भक्तिगम्याय नमः

om bhaktigamyāya namah

54. Attainable (*Gamya*) through devotion (*Bhakti*).

How is fearlessness obtained? Steadiness arises out of devotion which is the purest expression of the heart. Faith is a critical part of devotion. The Moon represents the heart and thus devotion itself.

ॐ भवबन्धविमोचकाय नमः

om bhavabandhavimocakāya namah

55. Freeing (*Vimochaka*) us from emotional bonds.

Bhavabandha is the attachment to worldliness, to the idea that ‘I am me and all this is mine’. Truth is like the knowing of an actor in a play. He is absorbed in it and yet aware that it is just a part that will soon be over. The idea that nothing exists beyond the human life is like the actor forgetting that he or she has a life outside of the play. Then he is trapped in the brief existence of that play – just an hour or two to live and experience. When I worked in the theatre, sometimes I felt like that because I enjoyed the performances so much. I can remember the pain that came with the briefness.

Thoughts and feelings only know their little scope and their desperate impermanence. No wonder we suffer when we identify with them, when we take them as our life. This name arises here since thoughts and feelings are indicated by the Moon and every ill contains its own medicine.

ॐ जगत्प्रकाशकिरणाय नमः

om jagatprakāśakiraṇāya namah

56. The splendidorous (*Prakāśa*) rays of light (*Kiraṇa*) of the world (*Jagat*).

If there is no mind, there is no world. The Moon indicates the mind and its light gives us the experience of the world. It also shows us what is true when we relax our grip and gently let go of all our issues and agendas. At night, it is the Moon that gives us light both outside and inside. In deep sleep, the mind gives dreams and revelations.

Our mother and the Mother are the light of our world.

ॐ जगदानन्दकारणाय नमः

om jagadānandakāraṇāya namah

57. The cause (*Kāraṇa*) of the joy (*Ananda*) of the world (*Jagad*). The one who gives rise to the bliss of all beings.

As the Moon waxes, all beings feel more alive. Even the plants grow more. Mother and motherhood are the greatest source of joy. Any obstacles to this joy are seen as afflictions to the Moon in the Vedic chart. Vedic Astrology believes that life can be improved through various remedies.

ॐ निःसप्तनाय नमः

om nihsapatnāya namah

58. He has no rival or enemy (*Nihsapatna*).

A mother's heart only knows how to give so she has no sense of enmity toward others. The Moon alone, amongst the nine planets of astrology, sees no one as an enemy. Others, out of selfishness, may see her as an enemy. It is natural that the Moon indicates a ruler who cares like a mother.

The two female planets are very different in this regard. The Moon sees no enemies and is entirely unselfish. Venus can be selfish and may see someone who does not cooperate as an opponent. That is why Venus can seek retribution. On the other hand, Venus is by nature very friendly. Venus wants to have fun with you while the Moon asks if you have eaten.

ॐ निराहाराय नमः

om nirāhārāya namah

59. Not eating (*Nirāhāra*).

This name can refer to fasting like Moon 35 or it indicates a condition that requires no food to sustain it. This has the same meaning along with the inner indication of a state devoid of the idea of 'me' and 'mine'. Normally, the mind 'eats' the objects revealed by the senses but there is a condition where they are seen but no identification occurs. This may seem to make no sense unless one has experienced it.

There are many examples in nature of animal mothers who fast for long periods usually for the sake of protecting their offspring. Examples are octopuses and whales. There are examples, both in the West and the East, of saintly people who have no need to eat such as Alexandrina Maria da Costa and Prahlad Jani (see Sun 52) both of whom were tested by expert doctors.

ॐ निवर्किराय नमः

om nirvikārāya namah

60. Unperturbed (*Nirvikāra*).

The Moon is associated with being emotional and thus often perturbed. This mantra may help bring more balance. Nirvikāra also means free from modification or change, including changing the mind or purpose, and free from sickness or agitation. It indicates a state of consciousness, like the image of Shiva, where the Moon or mind has become an ornament.

ॐ निरामयाय नमः

om nirāmayāya namaḥ

61. Without defect, unpolluted.

The Moon is Sāttvic or pure by nature and likes its environment to be in such a condition. This may be one reason why Cancer and Leo sometimes have a problem with marriage. These signs face signs of Saturn who is not usually Sāttvic. It helps if Saturn is in a Sāttvic sign (ruled by the Sun, Moon or Jupiter) or associated with a Sāttvic planet like Jupiter.

ॐ भूच्छायाऽच्छादिताय नमः

om bhūcchāyā'cchādītāya namaḥ

62. Hidden (*Accchādīta*) by the shadow of the Earth (*Bhū Chhāya*).

This name shows how well the ancients knew the nature of a lunar eclipse. It also tells us how the shadow of matter hides the light of the soul, which reflects through the mind or heart. It is not the objects that hide the light but their shadow, which is the belief that 'I am me, this is mine'. This belief is perfectly natural if the Self is not known. Merely trying to believe otherwise achieves nothing. If the Self is known, then the understanding changes by itself. One sees the Self to be all-pervading.

ॐ भव्याय नमः

om bhavyāya namaḥ

63. Auspicious (*Bhavya*), calm, tranquil, fit or worthy, fortunate, happy, handsome or beautiful.

The Moon and Jupiter are the cause of beauty according to Mahārishi Jaimini.

ॐ भुवनप्रतिपालकाय नमः

om bhuvanapratipālakāya namah

64. Protecting (*Pratipālaka*) mankind and the earth (*Bhuvana*).

Wise rulers, environmentalists and sages could all be indicated here as well as the true mother and father in all of us. The 64th name is special because it is $4 \times 4 \times 4$ and 4 is the number of the sign Cancer, which is ruled by the Moon. The fourth house is the place we feel in our heart and where we enjoy our relatives and home. The 4th from the 4th is the place of our partner who enchants our heart. The 4th from the 4th from the 4th is the tenth house of career and status where we take action so we can support our spouse, our home and our society and keep it free from poverty and other sufferings.

A Navāṁsha is a 108th part of the zodiac. The 64th Navāṁsha from the Moon is considered dangerous as it falls in the centre of the eighth sign from the Moon, which shows mortality. This mantra can act as an antidote to this danger.

ॐ सकलार्तिहराय नमः

om sakalārtiharāya namah

65. Destroying (*Hara*) all (*Sakala*) miseries (*Arti*).

This is the role of the mother and the capacity of a strong mind. When a strong Moon rises in the Ascendant in the Vedic chart, then the person usually tries to relieve the suffering of others. The classic chart examples are Shri Rāma and Shri Krishna.

ॐ सौम्यजनकाय नमः

om saumyajanakāya namah

66. A gentle person (*Janaka*).

Saumya is peaceful, mild and gentle. This is the ideal of femininity. Naturally, every man and woman has something of both the masculine and the feminine in them. Those areas of the Vedic chart that are touched by the Moon show more of the gentle caring feminine qualities. In English we speak of a 'gentleman' or 'gentlewoman' indicating a kindly person of good manners.

ॐ साधुवन्दिताय नमः

om sādhuvanditāya namaḥ

67. Worshipped (*Vandita*) or praised by the wise (*Sādhu*).

Anyone with a pure mind attracts the plaudits of wise people. The wise naturally respect the feminine. If it is part of their religion, they often worship the Mother Goddess. What is more precious than the mother principle?

ॐ सर्वागमज्ञाय नमः

om sarvāgamajñāya namaḥ

68. Knowing (*Jñā*) all (*Sarva*) the sacred texts (*Agama*) or all kinds of knowledge.

A pure mind is capable of vast learning. It can give an exceptional or photographic memory.

ॐ सर्वज्ञाय नमः

om sarvajñāya namaḥ

69. All knowing (*Sarvajña*).

All knowingness is not a result of study. It is a natural state that arises when the mind becomes purified and the awareness fathoms deep silence. Close to absolute awareness is a state in which anything can be known but those pieces of knowledge are trivial compared to the dignity of the all-knowingness.

Purity of mind is not achieved just by diet and fasting even though this may help. One's Rājasic and Tāmasic tendencies have to be worn away. Tamas is dullness and activity helps. Rajas is constant mental activity that can be calmed by a purer diet, meditation and other spiritual practices. Patience and persistence are key.

ॐ सनकादिमुनिस्तुत्याय नमः

om sanakādimunistutyāya namaḥ

70. Praised (*Stutya*) by the foremost amongst the wise.

Sanaka and his three brothers (indicated by *Adi*) were the first humans. These *Munis*

are considered immortal. They were born free of any craving and pass their days in meditation. This name suggests a condition of the mind that is totally at rest.

Sanaka and his brothers are the Devatās associated with the Chaturamsha or D4 divisional chart in Vedic Astrology. From this, affairs such as happiness and property are determined, which are also known from the fourth house in the chart. The divisional charts are subcharts of the Vedic chart that come from the division of a sign into a number of parts. These charts focus on a particular issue based on the division and the method of construction. To make the D4 chart, each sign is divided into four.

The Moon rules over the fourth sign and is thus naturally associated with the fourth house and the D4. Hence, the special connection with these Munis is mentioned here. This emphasizes that, in order to get the benefits of the D4, one needs a pure mind. It is a pure mind that attracts the support of the Devatās of the D4. The D4 helps us see intelligence, Buddhi, purity, Shuddhi, increase, Vriddhi, and perfection, Siddhi. These are the qualities associated with the four angles or Kendras of a chart and elaborated in the D4 sub-chart. Nothing is achieved without these four 'Dhis'.

ॐ सितच्छत्रध्वजोपेताय नमः

om sitacchatradhvajopetāya namah

71. Having (*Upeta*) a white umbrella (*Sita Chhatra*) as his sign (*Dhvaja*).

Traditionally in India, due to the strength of the Sun, royalty and high dignitaries had umbrellas to protect them. They are a mark of high station. The Moon has a white one indicative of purity or Sattva.

ॐ सिताङ्गाय नमः

om sitāṅgāya namah

72. Having white limbs or body (*Ariga*).

White (*Sita*) means both pale and pure.

ॐ सितभूषणाय नमः

om sitabhūṣaṇāya namah

73. With white (*Sita*) ornaments (*Bhūṣaṇa*).

White cloth, flowers and ornaments are used in the worship of the Moon.

ॐ श्वेतमाल्याम्बरधराय नमः

om śvetamālyāmbaradharāya namah

74. Wearing (*Dhara*) a white garland (*Shveta Mālya*) and white clothes (*Ambara*).

ॐ श्वेतगन्धानुलेपनाय नमः

om śvetagandhānulepanāya namah

75. Anointed (*Anulepana*) with white sandalwood paste (*Shveta Gandha*).

This name indicates an odour of absolute purity, which is essentially odourless.

ॐ दशाश्रथसंरूपाय नमः

om daśāśvarathasaṁrūḍhāya namah

76. Riding (*Samrūḍha*) a chariot (*Ratha*) with ten horses (*Daśāśva*).

The mind functions through the ten Indriyas - the five organs of action and the five senses. The five organs of action are the legs, the arms, the mouth, the anus and the reproductive organs. The five senses are the organs of hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling.

ॐ दण्डपाणये नमः

om dāṇḍapāṇaye namah

77. Holding (*Pāṇi*) a staff (*Dāṇḍa*) indicating the power of rulership.

Kings take up the Dāṇḍa when they have to punish or as a symbol of their earthly power like a sceptre. The staff also indicates the spinal column and hence the awakened Kuṇḍalinī. Swāmis carry a staff to indicate their awakened state or as a reminder for them of what they are to attain if they are yet not fully realized.

ॐ धनुर्धराय नमः
om dhanurdharāya namah

78. Holding (*Dhara*) a bow (*Dhanu*).

The Grahas or planets are depicted carrying various objects, mostly weapons. Each is a symbol. The Moon's sign Cancer starts with Punarvasu; it is the first Nakshatra or constellation in the sign of Cancer. It has a bow as one of its symbols. The next Nakshatra in Cancer is Pushya which has an arrow. Together they can hit the target. A bow represents potential. A quiet mind is like a fully drawn bow.

ॐ कुन्दपुष्पोज्ज्वलाकाराय नमः
om kundapuṣpojjvalākārāya namah

79. Whose form (*Akāra*) is shining (*Ujjvala*) with Jasmine (*Kunda*) flowers (*Puṣpa*) or it shines like them.

This is the preferred type of flower for the worship of the Moon. Naturally they are white and release their auspicious and romantic fragrance at night.

ॐ नयनाब्जसमुद्रवाय नमः
om nayanābjasamudbhavāya namah

80. Born (*Samudbhava*) of the lotus eyed (*Nayanābja*).

The source of the mind is said to be the lotus-eyed One, which indicates the divinity or the ever awakened consciousness. Even in the unawakened, the mind is there but there is no awareness of the source of the mind. When its source is realized, then the divinity from which it springs comes to be known.

Those with a strong Moon associated with the first or second houses in the Vedic chart may have beautiful eyes.

ॐ आत्रेयगोत्रजाय नमः
om ātreyagotrajāya namah

81. Belonging to the family lineage (*Gotra*) of Sage *Atri*.

Atri is especially associated with medicine. As Mercury was born of the Moon, he is also of this family or *Gotra*. Thus the Moon and Mercury indicate physicians. Almost everyone of Indian origin knows their *Gotra* or lineage. Each *Gotra* is named after a seer who is said to be the progenitor of that lineage. If one does not know your *Gotra*, then there is a method to choose it from the chart. For this and other uses, each of the planets has a *Gotra*.

ॐ अत्यन्तविनयाय नमः

om atyantavinayāya namah

82. Extremely polite.

Vinaya is decorum, courtesy, good manners, reverence, modesty, humility and sense of propriety. *Atyanta* means the ultimate development or extent of these qualities. A strong and unafflicted Moon or a chart ruled by a good Moon (Cancer rising) or having the Moon in the first house (personality) or tenth house (public persona) or as the *AtmaKāraka*⁶ can be like this. These qualities are expected of people in very high positions in society and the Moon represents such people.

ॐ प्रियदायकाय नमः

om priyadāyakāya namah

83. Beloved (*Priya*). Giving (*Dāyaka*) the feeling of fondness.

The Moon is the mother. Except where the Moon has some great affliction, she is the dearest one for us. Further, lunar influence makes one feel fondness or attachment for those things associated with the position of the Moon in the Vedic chart. Those with the Moon in the first house, the place representing the self, can give and receive great love. This is the case for the great Avatāras, Shri Rāma and Shri Krishna.

ॐ करुणारससम्पूर्णाय नमः

om karuṇārasasampūrṇāya namah

84. Overflowing (*Sampūrṇa*) with the essence or milk of compassion (*Karuṇā Rasa*).

The expression ‘the milk of compassion’ comes from the love embodied in breastfeeding. The connection with the Moon as mother is very clear. Lunar people are very sensitive and capable of deep love and kindness. They want to save all beings which is the natural tendency of motherhood.

ॐ कर्कटप्रभवे नमः

om karkataprabhave namaḥ

85. The ruler (*Prabhu*) of the sign of Cancer, the crab (*Karkata*).

This sign has the Bhava or mood of the Moon. There is a type of crab that has the greatest power of grip per unit area in the natural kingdom. It is simple to equate this to the human mind. Counting from zero degrees Aries, this name (i.e. the 85th Navāṁsha) falls near the middle of Capricorn, the tenth sign, where the mind pursues its status and power. Capricorn is literally opposite to Cancer.

ॐ अव्ययाय नमः

om avyayāya namaḥ

86. Imperishable (*Avyaya*).

Even though the Moon waxes and wanes, motherhood and all the Moon represents will always be there. The Moon sheds the nectar that brings immortality of consciousness and extends the life of the body.

ॐ चतुरश्रासनारूढाय नमः

om caturaśrāsanārūḍhāya namaḥ

87. Stationed (*Arūḍha*) on a four-cornered seat (*Caturashra Asana*).

A square or rectangle can be used to indicate the Moon in Chakras drawn for Pūja or worship. It emphasizes the connection with the number four. Cancer is the fourth sign and the fourth house represents mother and has the Moon for its Kāraka or signifier.

Chaturashra also indicates the fourth and eighth houses in the chart. These are the places of refuge. For protection, one has to strengthen the fourth and keep the eighth as clean as possible because it is the place of our own faults, including all the accumulation

of sins of the past. Astrology is especially associated with the eighth house and that is why some people are frightened of astrology.

The eighth house purpose of astrology is to see the punishment coming and to understand what voluntary payment can be made before the demand arrives. Priests are seen in the ninth house and they can fall due to the eighth because it is the twelfth from the ninth and therefore the place of loss for them. This may be why some religious leaders frown on astrology, while often consulting astrologers in private.

ॐ चतुराय नमः

om caturāya namah

88. Charming, clever and ingenious (*Chatura*).

Chatura is also swift, like the Moon relative to the other celestial objects. The mind also moves quickly. *Chatur* is the number four. The Moon rules the fourth sign. It is the first of the Moksha or liberation signs. In the Yogic literature, the fourth indicates the state of consciousness beyond waking, dreaming and sleeping. It is beyond change (Moon 86). The mind is not active in that state but it is known as consciousness persists.

ॐ दिव्यवाहनाय नमः

om divyavāhanāya namah

89. Having a divine (*Divya*) vehicle (*Vāhana*).

The pure mind rides on pure Being, which is pure divinity.

ॐ विवस्वन्मण्डलाज्ञेयवासाय नमः

om vivasvanmaṇḍalājñeyavāsāya namah

90. Hiding the Sun's orb (*Vivasvan Maṇḍala*).

Moon 62 describes the lunar eclipse. This name explains the solar eclipse. Literally, it says that the Sun's orb becomes unknowable (*Ajñeya*) due to the position (*Vāsa*) of the Moon. This also explains how the Self is hidden by the mind. Seeing only the products of the mind, thoughts and feelings, we miss the One who is the witness of them all. The great sage, Ramana Mahārishi, advised self-enquiry. This can start with the question "Who am I?"

or “Where does this ‘I’ come from?” Here ‘I’ is the sense of individuality that associates with our mental experiences. With constant attention to the I-sense, it eventually subsides, leading to Self-realization.

ॐ वसुसमृद्धिदाय नमः

om vasusamṛddhidāya namah

91. Giving (*Da*) abundant and increasing (*Samṛddhi*) wealth (*Vasu*).

A strong Moon can make you part of the elite. Alternatively, it can make you truly wise if the Moon’s combinations in the Vedic chart are favourable for this. The elite have access to material wealth; the wise have more internal resources.

ॐ महेश्वरप्रियाय नमः

om maheśvarapriyāya namah

92. Beloved (*Priya*) of Lord Shiva, the great Lord (*Maheshvara*).

The spouse of Shiva is Parvatī and She has many names and forms. The Moon with Saturn, Rāhu or Ketu indicates the names Kālī, Durgā or Chandikā. She is pure Mother but her nature is to destroy the ignorance. Therefore, She may appear terrific. In whatever form or mood, She is most beloved of Shiva.

If a person’s chosen deity is shown by the Moon, there will be a preference for the feminine, the Divine Mother, in whatever way She is seen in the person’s religion. For the Hindu, this can mean a form of the Goddess associated with Lord Vishnu or Lord Shiva. This name refers to the Moon as the wife of Shiva. If the Moon is associated with Mercury, which indicates Vishnu, then the Goddess can be Lakshmī. Mercury can also indicate Tripurā or Saraswati.

ॐ दान्ताय नमः

om dāntāya namah

93. The giver or the mild one.

Dānta can indicate one who is restrained or has their senses under control. Such people are mild in manner and generous in spirit. The Moon represents donors as well as the

liberal minded. Caring for others and the environment is natural and without this society tends towards collapse. That is why the Moon represents society.

I once was living with a German friend. Both of us were close friends with our neighbor, Jane. My friend was a very sweet person but he had some issues relating to the Second World War. One day he made a remark that was rather anti-Semitic. I said, "Do you mean Jane?" She was Jewish. He understood and I never heard any such remarks from him again. Friendship binds communities together and splitting into groups weakens them. People are naturally friendly but religious and political leaders often see that exaggerating differences and thereby splitting communities boosts their personal power. So it happens again and again.

The astrological chart presents archetypes in Cancer and Capricorn that embody these perpetual problems. Capricorn is the sign of big business and the search for power in general. Capricorn has a great capacity for good and large companies support vast numbers of people. It all depends on the balance between collecting and sharing. An economy works if the resources are fully recycled. The present huge economic strains that are threatening our world appear to result from the failure to recycle. Resources are flowing from the many at the bottom of the pyramid and collecting at the top, with insufficient being distributed in wages, benefits and social programs.

The world's wealthiest man had the great inspiration to encourage the billionaires of the world to recycle their wealth and he deserves great credit for this. One notes, however, that his personal wealth keeps increasing. No doubt it is not for any lack of good intention, rather it is very hard for a person to spend such mountains of money. In the USA and elsewhere, there is constant pressure on the government to reduce taxes for the wealthy. As a result, they tend to go down. This exacerbates the problems that threaten the social structure and thus the welfare of the wealthy. It would be much better if the wealthy choose to pay more and used their lobbying power to see that it was spent efficiently on such things as infrastructure, education and health care that directly benefit everybody. This would boost the economy making it most unlikely that the extra taxes they pay would actually reduce their own abundance. In other words, social responsibility has benefits in every direction.

ॐ मेरुगोत्रप्रदक्षिणाय नमः

om merugotrapradaksināya namah

94. Circumambulating Mount *Meru*.

This name contains the idea that the Moon is never retrograde as *Pradakshina* means

keeping that which you are circulating always to one's right. *Meru* is the mythical mountain at the North pole. *Gotra* can mean the earth so this name means the Moon is orbiting the earth. It also suggests that the movement of the Moon is naturally sacred as *Pradakṣiṇa* is a motion made out of giving respect or devotion. *Meru* is associated Tantrically with the spine. The earth indicates the *Mūlādhāra Chakra* at the base of the spine so the name indicates the direction that the energy circulates there. Consciousness rotating in that place can help to awaken the power of the Goddess.

ॐ ग्रहमण्डलमध्यस्थाय नमः

om grahamandalamadhyasthāya namah

95. Standing (*Stha*) in the middle (*Madhya*) of the *Maṇḍala* of the Grahas.

A *Maṇḍala* is a sacred diagram. In the diagram in which all the nine planets are placed, the Moon should be in the middle. In fact, she is normally placed in the top right. Therefore, the *Maṇḍala* indicated here is another one where the luminaries are in the centre and are surrounded by the other Grahas. This is the reality of life because the sense of self, the Sun, and the mind, the Moon, are at the centre of our experience surrounded by the other parts of life indicated by the other planets. Similarly, the mother with the father is at the centre of the family.

ॐ ग्रसितार्काय नमः

om grasitārkāya namah

96. Absorbing (*Gras*) logic or desire (*Tārka*).

The mind enables and sustains both reason and desire. *Tārka* is both along with philosophy and speculation, doubt and logic.

ॐ ग्रहाधिपाय नमः

om grahādhīpāya namah

97. Foremost (*Adhipa*) amongst the planets (*Graha*).

The Moon indicates rulers such as kings or queens. The Moon also plays a pivotal role in the study of the Vedic chart because it shows our experience of the world.

ॐ द्विजराजाय नमः
om dvijarājāya namah

98. Like a king (*Rāja*) amongst the twice-born.

Dvija usually refers to the learned or priestly people but it can also mean the warrior and business classes. In any establishment class, the Moon can indicate a leading person.

ॐ द्युतिलकाय नमः
om dyutilakāya namah

99. Having a majestic (*Dyuti*) forehead (*Laka*).

This can be a mark of those with a strong Moon in the first house. It also means lustrous, perhaps indicating that the inner vision is awake.

ॐ द्विभुजाय नमः
om dvibhujāya namah

100. Two armed (*Dwi Bhuja*).

The Grahas are depicted with two or four arms. Here it is said that the Moon has two arms but sometime he is portrayed as four-armed. Traditionally, one hand gives boons while another grants freedom from fear. If there are only two arms, then there is no hand to carry weapons. Thus, the two-armed form is very benign.

ॐ द्विजपूजिताय नमः
om dvijapūjitāya namah

101. Worshipped (*Pūjita*) by the twice-born.

The *Dwija* are said to be twice-born because they are reborn through initiation into the Vedic studies. This is not just starting school; rather it implies an inner awakening. The study of the Vedas provides the understanding of the unfolding experiences within consciousness. In the modern context, *Dwija* refers to every sincere seeker. We honour the Moon by respect-

ing the divine creative principle, by respecting every part of its creation to the best of our ability and by seeking to have a clean and pure heart and mind.

ॐ औदुम्बरनगावासाय नमः

om audumbaranagāvāsāya namah

102. Living on mountains covered in *Audumbara* trees.

Nagāvāsa can mean living in a tree or on a mountain. The Audumbara trees are found on mountains in South India and often in the areas of sacred places like temples. The Moon is the Goddess and her temples are generally found at the top of hills and mountains. Even where there is a Devī temple in a valley, there is likely a sister or root temple at the top of a neighbouring hill. Nearby, you often find an Audumbara tree. When visiting Italy, I noticed that many larger hills had shrines to the Mother near the top. This name gives us a clue to this special connection with mountains or the sacredness of this particular tree.

ॐ उदाराय नमः

om udārāya namah

103. Generous. Also noble, illustrious, honest, sincere, upright (*Udāra*).

ॐ रोहिणीपतये नमः

om rohiṇīpataye namah

104. The ruler (*Pati*) of *Rohinī* Nakshatra.

Rohinī is ruled over by the divine progenitor Prajāpati and as such represents great fertility. It is the first Nakshatra after the Moon reaches its zenith of purity, its exaltation point, at three degrees of Taurus. At that point, the mind, free of confusion, can start to function and do its best creative work. This occurs in the Nakshatra Krittikā. Krittikā and the previous Nakshatra Bharaṇī are best suited for inner contemplation to prepare the purity of mind. Once it is achieved, then all creativity can arise. (See also Moon 20.)

ॐ नित्योदयाय नमः

om nityodayāya namah

105. Giving endless results (*Nitya Udaya*). Ever prospering. Eternally rising.

Proper worship as touched on above (Moon 101) has more than a momentary result. A quieter, gentler state of awareness is endlessly giving its sweetness. In the chart, a strong, well placed and associated Moon can indicate ongoing prosperity.

ॐ मुनिस्तुत्याय नमः

om munistutyāya namah

106. Worshipped (*Stutya*) by the wise.

The word *Muni* suggests one who has a profound inner quietness free of the notions of 'I', 'me' and 'mine'.

ॐ नित्यानन्दफलप्रदाय नमः

om nityānandaphalapradāya namah

107. Giving (*Prada*) the fruit (*Phala*) of eternal bliss (*Nitya Ananda*).

The Sun gives eternal bliss (Sun 108). The Moon gives its fruit.

ॐ सकलाह्लादनकराय नमः

om sakalāhlādanakarāya namah

108. Causing (*Kara*) complete happiness (*Sakala Ahlādaka*). Entirely lovely.

This name secretly suggests the rare Tantric mantras of the Shri Vidyā. The Shri Vidyā is a very high form of the worship of the Goddess. It is intimately associated with the lunar days. There is an important associated text (the *Trishati*) of 300 names of the Divine Mother, 20 for each of the tithis or lunar days of each fortnight. Each of the 20 starts with a letter of the mantra.

Sakala is part of the mantra and also indicates the full Moon which is the time when the Moon is having all its digits (Moon 28). This is associated with the putative sixteenth syllable of the Shri Vidyā mantra. The sixteenth is the indicator of the absolute aspect, that which is beyond the activity of the mind, beyond the rising and falling. This state is celebrated in almost all these names of the Moon.

As in all the sets of names, the 108th mantra of the Moon has a special glory. The 108th is connected to the last of the 108 Navāṁshas in the zodiac and naturally represents a completeness of knowledge and realization.

ॐ पलाशेऽमप्रियाय नमः

om palāśedhmapriyāya namah

109. Fond of twigs of the *Palasha* plant.

The twigs are used as fuel in the fire offerings to the Moon. This 109th mantra may be a later addition to specify the fuel. In the mantra lists, only the Moon and Rāhu have 109 and the last mantra of both falls far short of the glory of the 108th.

ॐ तत् सत्

Om tat sat

THE MANTRAS OF CHANDRA IN TRANSLITERATION

1. om śrīmate namaḥ
2. om śāśadharāya namaḥ
3. om candrāya namaḥ
4. om tārādhīśāya namaḥ
5. om niśākarāya namaḥ
6. om sudhānidhaye namaḥ
7. om sadārādhyāya namaḥ
8. om satpataye namaḥ
9. om sādhupūjītāya namaḥ
10. om jitendriyāya namaḥ
11. om jayodyogāya namaḥ
12. om jyotiścakrapravartakāya namaḥ
13. om vikartanānujāya namaḥ
14. om vīrāya namaḥ
15. om viśveśāya namaḥ
16. om viduṣāmpataye namaḥ
17. om doṣākarāya namaḥ
18. om duṣṭadūrāya namaḥ
19. om puṣṭimate namaḥ
20. om śiṣṭapālakāya namaḥ
21. om aṣṭamūrtipriyāya namaḥ
22. om anantāya namaḥ
23. om kaṣṭadārukuṭhārakāya namaḥ
24. om svaprakāśāya namaḥ
25. om prakāśātmane namaḥ
26. om dyucarāya namaḥ
27. om devabhojanāya namaḥ
28. om kalādharāya namaḥ
29. om kālahetave namaḥ
30. om kāmakṛte namaḥ
31. om kāmadāyakāya namaḥ
32. om mṛtyusamhārakāya namaḥ
33. om amartyāya namaḥ
34. om nityānuṣṭhānadāyakāya namaḥ
35. om kṣapākarāya namaḥ

36. om kṣīṇapāpāya namaḥ
37. om kṣayavṛddhisamanvitāya namaḥ
38. om jaivāṭrkāya namaḥ
39. om śucaye namaḥ
40. om śubhrāya namaḥ
41. om jayne namaḥ
42. om jayaphalapradāya namaḥ
43. om sudhāmayāya namaḥ
44. om surasvāmine namaḥ
45. om bhaktānāmiṣṭadāyakāya namaḥ
46. om bhuktidāya namaḥ
47. om muktidāya namaḥ
48. om bhadrāya namaḥ
49. om bhaktadāridryabhañjanāya namaḥ
50. om sāmagānapriyāya namaḥ
51. om sarvarakṣakāya namaḥ
52. om sārgarodbhavāya namaḥ
53. om bhayāntakṛte namaḥ
54. om bhaktigamyāya namaḥ
55. om bhavabandhavimocakāya namaḥ
56. om jagatprakāśakiraṇāya namaḥ
57. om jagadānandakāraṇāya namaḥ
58. om niḥsapatnāya namaḥ
59. om nirāhārāya namaḥ
60. om nirvikārāya namaḥ
61. om nirāmayāya namaḥ
62. om bhūcchāyā'cchāditāya namaḥ
63. om bhavyāya namaḥ
64. om bhuvanapratipālakāya namaḥ
65. om sakalārtiharāya namaḥ
66. om saumyajanakāya namaḥ
67. om sādhuvanditāya namaḥ
68. om sarvāgamajñāya namaḥ
69. om sarvajñāya namaḥ
70. om sanakādimunistutyāya namaḥ
71. om sitacchatradhvajopetāya namaḥ
72. om sitāṅgāya namaḥ
73. om sitabhūṣaṇāya namaḥ

74. om śvetamālyāmbaradharāya namaḥ
75. om śvetagandhānulepanāya namaḥ
76. om daśāśvarathasamṛūḍhāya namaḥ
77. om dāṇḍapāṇaye namaḥ
78. om dhanurdharāya namaḥ
79. om kundapuṣpojjvalākārāya namaḥ
80. om nayanābjasamudbhavāya namaḥ
81. om ātreyagotrajāya namaḥ
82. om atyantavinayāya namaḥ
83. om priyadāyakāya namaḥ
84. om karuṇārasasampūrṇāya namaḥ
85. om karkaṭaprabhave namaḥ
86. om avyayāya namaḥ
87. om caturaśrāsanārūḍhāya namaḥ
88. om caturāya namaḥ
89. om divyavāhanāya namaḥ
90. om vivasvanmaṇḍalājñeyavāsāya namaḥ
91. om vasusamṛddhidāya namaḥ
92. om maheśvarapriyāya namaḥ
93. om dāntāya namaḥ
94. om merugotrapradakṣiṇāya namaḥ
95. om grahamamaṇḍalamadhyasthāya namaḥ
96. om grāsitārkāya namaḥ
97. om grahādhīpāya namaḥ
98. om dvijarājāya namaḥ
99. om dyutilakāya namaḥ
100. om dvibhujāya namaḥ
101. om dvijapūjītāya namaḥ
102. om audumbaranagāvāsāya namaḥ
103. om udārāya namaḥ
104. om rohiṇīpataye namaḥ
105. om nityodayāya namaḥ
106. om munisutuṭyāya namaḥ
107. om nityānandaphalapradāya namaḥ
108. om sakalāhlādanakarāya namaḥ
109. om palāśedhmapriyāya namaḥ

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While these lists are well known to traditional astrologers in India, I only found two places where they had been printed. I am thus indebted to Dr Mrs Saraswathy and Prof. B. A. Eeswaran for publishing a Sanskrit text of the names of the Grahas in their book *NavaGrahas*, albeit without translation and source, and Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao for his outstanding compendium *The NavaGraha Kosha*, which includes another set. Prof. Rao informed me that his work was based on a medieval text. Regretfully Prof. Rao has passed away. These two sources have some differences. Where I felt that both versions of a name had merit, I included both under the same number.

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Two great artists have kindly allowed me to showcase their beautiful work. Pieter Weltevrede, acclaimed Dutch master painter, did all the colour work. The drawings were done by the highly talented Jane Adams. Find out more about them in the Section 'The Artists'.

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Andrew Foss has a PhD in Computing Science from the University of Alberta and is also an Oxford University Physics graduate with publications in Nature and other leading scientific journals. He is the author of the book *High-Dimensional Data Mining*. He enjoys a deep love of music, art and poetry and has more than 30 years experience studying and teaching the Vedic wisdom around the world. He is the Founding President of the British Association of Vedic Astrology, Editor of the BAVA Journal *Gochara* and is a Certified Jaimini Scholar and Jyotish Pandit, the highest professional certifications in Vedic Astrology involving nine years of continuous study. He has developed the unique, easy and powerful software **Shri Jyoti Star** that has become the first choice amongst the leading Vedic Astrologers around the world. Andrew is married and lives with his family in Virginia, USA.

SECRETS OF VIMSHOTTARI DASHĀ

As a bonus I have decided to publish some unique secrets about Vedic Astrology in the printed version of this book, which will also have the mantras of all nine planets. Please visit YogaOfThePlanets.com for more information.

For 33 years, I, like everyone else who studies Jyotisha, wondered about the origin of the lengths of the Vimshottari Dashās. I could never find a way into this mystery. Nowhere in the literature, ancient or modern, can even a satisfactory hint be found. Then, on July 7, 2015, I saw on the web at least a partial derivation of the sequence of lords. It relied on knowing the Dashā cycle lengths. At the end, the author appealed for someone to find a solution to the problem of deriving the length of the cycles. The thought came, 'let's give it a shot'.

I pulled out a fresh sheet of paper and started writing down equations that might help. Bit by bit the key principles unfolded themselves. It did not take long to realize that I had an answer and it just required some polishing. In the process, some wonderful insights appeared as well as a profound advance in the understanding of the Tāra Bala, which is most important for interpreting the Dashā. I have not found this written anywhere. Therefore, both these re-markable and interesting secrets were given to me and I am sharing them with you.

Notes

Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali. Trans. P.N. Mukerji, Univ. Of Calcutta, 1977.

Each Nakshatra or lunar mansion has a planetary ruler used in astrological calculations as well as a Vedic deity.

The AtmaKāraka is the soul planet. It is the Graha that has advanced furthest in its zodiacal sign. Rahu is naturally retrograde, so it is an exception being measured from the end of the sign. Ketu is not considered as it represents the freedom of the soul, not its embodiment.